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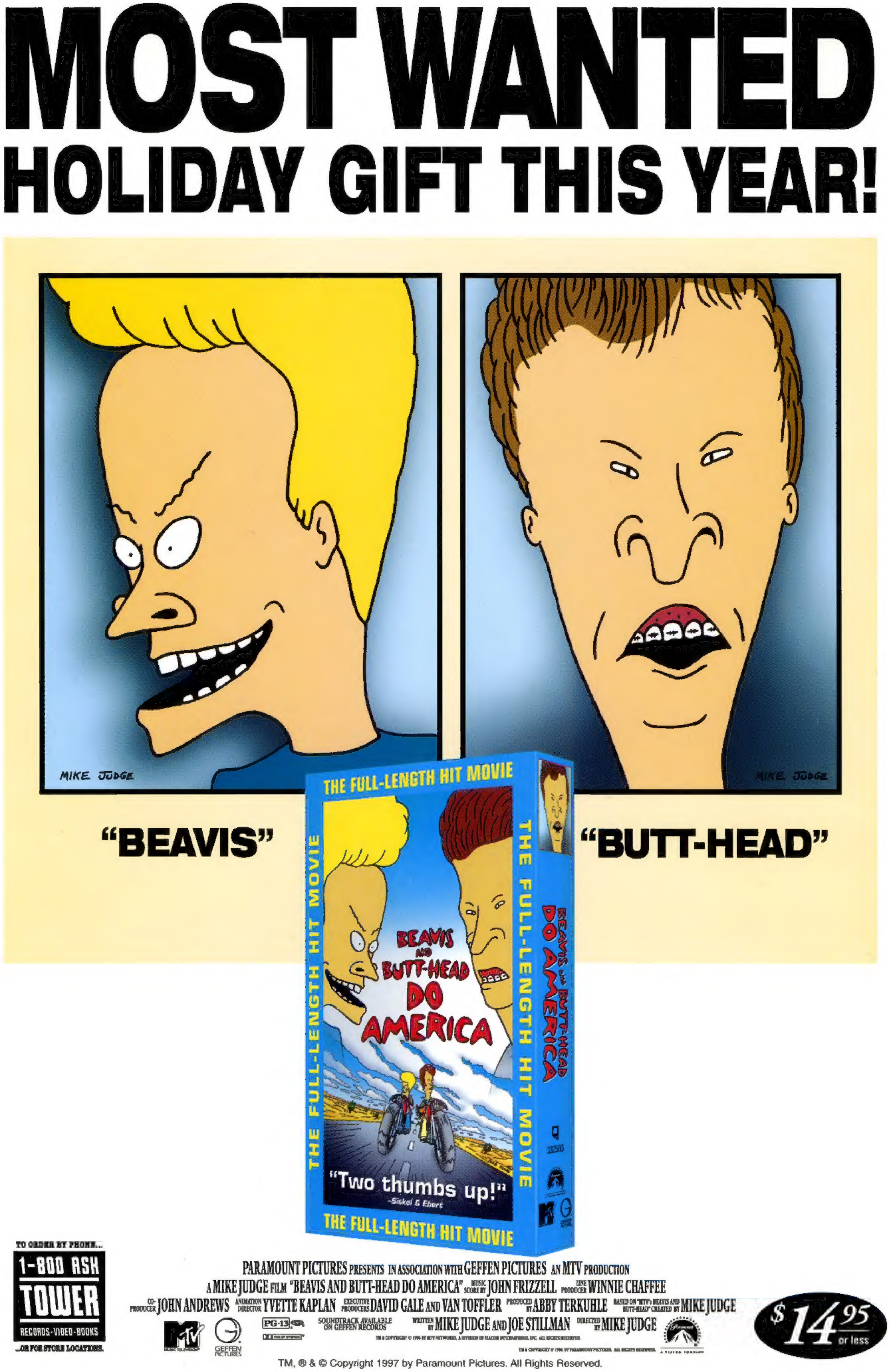

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STAN LEE PRESENTS

MARVEL VISION

FEBRUARY NINETEEN NINETY EIGHT

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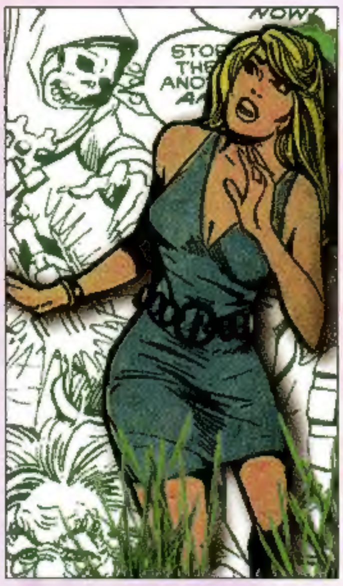

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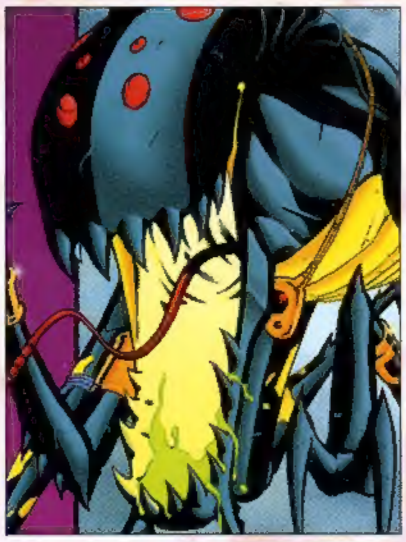

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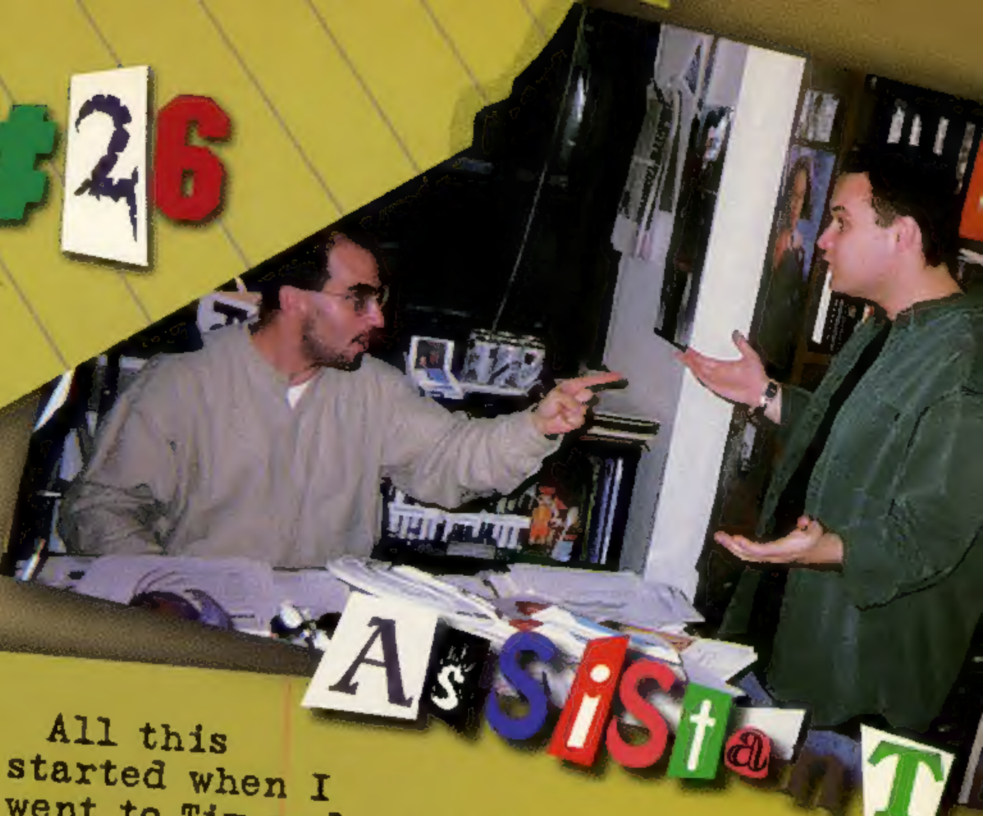
VISION #26

Julio Soto
Top of the heap
Eric Lopez Jr
Assisting this heap
Bryan Cairns, Dean Davis
Barry Dutter, Lysa Hawkins
Matt Idelson, Jim Krueger
Andy Mangels, Rob Piotrowski
Benny Powell, Peter Sanderson
Peter Schmidt & Polly Watson
Writing a heap
Chris Carroll, James DeSimone
Brent Ferguson, Jeanne Geier
Rob LaQuinta, Mel Sanchez
& Jeff Suter
Designing a heap
Vito Incorvaia
Heap o' hair
Bill Rosemann
Soliciting a heap
Regina Massaro
Licensing a heap
Susan Raso
Sends out this heap
Colleen Murphy
Prints a heap
John Stack
Drives a heap
Bob Harras
Editor in Heap
Jim (Ski) Sokolowski
Handling the editorial heap
Shirrel Rhoades
Heap of black clothes
Timothy Tuohy
Bottom of the heap



Assistant Editor's Month

All this started when I went to Tim and asked for a few more responsibilities with VISION. But much to my surprise he didn't want to let go. We argued, but in the end, well, you can see what happened. Obviously I won. So while Tim has been temporarily disposed of, we'll get to see how an issue of my VISION looks. In the mighty tradition of Marvel past, I, Julio Soto, declare this to be Assistant Editor's Month in the Marvel VISION office!

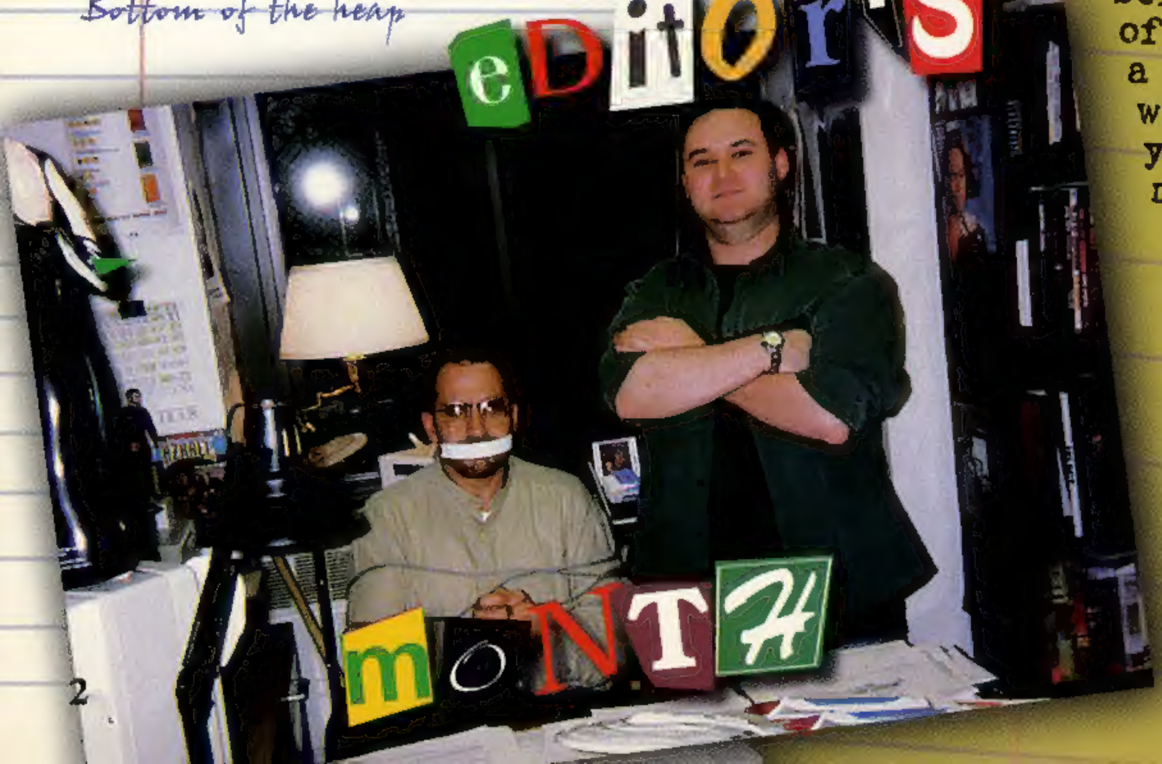
That means that I'm responsible for this issue and a few new features, things Tuohy was reluctant to do, like "Big Breaks," "Li'l Marvels," which made their debut last issue, and this issue's "Villains Board Game." My goal is to make VISION a lot more fun (and take credit for anything else that I can).

This month our cover story is the next Star Trek/X-Men crossover. Flip back to the beautiful cover by Cary Nord and Scott Koblish, colored by Liquid, and make sure to check out our coverage of this special event. Star Trek/X-Men II is going to be the sleeper hit of 1998!

Continuing the standard that began with my article in VISION #12 ("A Day In The Life Of An Intern"), we hear from another Marvel intern, Peter Schmidt, about the production of Trade Paperbacks. Also, in a strange bit of coincidence, we begin covering 1976, the year I was born, in this month's Marvel Chronicles.

Read on; I hope you enjoy this issue, and that you write in and be heard 'cuz I don't know how much longer I can keep Tuohy out of the picture. He's already starting to chew through the tape...

Thanks,
Julio



MARVEL VISION insights

Dear INSIGHTS,

Upon opening up VISION #22, I was again reminded why Marvel is the House of Ideas.

The heroes are returning soon and though I'm anxiously awaiting their return, I was concerned about Iron Man's new armor design. I really like the Heroes Reborn armor that Tony is sporting now, yet I knew that with the entrance of a new writer, Kurt Busiek, things were going to change.

As I scanned through VISION #22, I found Tony's new armor on page 9. I didn't think it was possible, but you actually came up with an armor design that tops them all. I like the fact that it has a retro look to it and that the golden Avenger's red and yellow color scheme was retained. Congratulations to all involved.

One last thing before I go, who designed the new Iron Man armor?

Vince Lombardi
14 Chelsea Circle
Flemington, NJ 08822

That snazzy new armor was designed by IRON MAN's very talented artist Sean Chen. Both Editor in Chief Bob Harras and the editor of IRON MAN, Bobbie Chase, really weren't sure about showing off the armor too soon. Your reaction is proof that we made the right decision.

Dear INSIGHTS,

You guys have got a really good magazine going here.

Whatever happened to the cool Marvel Masterpieces collectible cards? They're the things that got me into collecting Marvel Comics. The last time I saw them was the year 1994. But I'm glad you're making those new Marvel vs. Wildstorm Trading Cards.

Rob Drury
621 Crowin Road
Rochester, NY 14610

Thanks for your comments on VISION.

As always, Julio and I appreciate the time that it takes you out there to put pen to paper and write in. It doesn't go unnoticed.

As for the Marvel Masterpiece cards, they have evolved as the card business evolved. They now take on many different guises such as the recent Joe Quesada set. They might not be called the same but they're still masterpieces.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I love your extra length letters page. I wish that all comics would give us letterhacks that kind of exposure. And I loved the cartoons spread throughout, especially Devil Dinosaur's "Hey Spielberg, Jurassic Park this."

I like the way the Daily Bugle pages read more like a Marvel Universe newspaper would and less like hype for upcoming books.I especially enjoy JJJ's editorial.

Roy Thomas is one of my all-time favorite comic writers. I love his retroactive continuity. He is one of the few whose stories are worth the outlandish price of today's comics.

So John Buscema thinks super heroes are the dumbest things in the world. I always thought that was drunk drivers or drive-by shootings. I guess he never heard he shouldn't bite the hand that feeds him.

You should do more features on the comic greats like Al Williamson. The new comic readers need to know their roots.

Punisher: Time Slip—although I usually don't care for this feature, I'd buy a book featuring this Punisher. I've long since lost interest in the current one, wherever he is now.

I enjoy Marvel's Silliest Moments. I liked the concept of that Sgt. Fury story, but then, I'm weird.

Beast Files is probably my favorite feature currently. And I'd like more stuff on upcoming titles like Journey Into Mystery. Marvel Memories is okay.

I especially like looks at Marvel's past like Marvel Chronicles. This brings back lots of memories for a guy who was around at the dawn of the Marvel Age.

Bob Kowalski
3878 Garvin St.
Detroit, MI 48212

We knew that the flak would be flying over the Buscema piece and that's one of the main reasons we ran it. It's good to know that people who work in comics have minds and opinions and that those opinions should be expressed. Although John was never that enthusiastic toward the super hero genre his work on Conan is unequalled.

Whether or not we want to accept it, the comic world can be so much more than super heroes. John, in his own way, reminds us of that fact.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I have been wondering this for a while. Who of the following has the most control over lightning: Storm, Electro, or Thor?

Jason Reid
131 Cram Rd.
Weare, NH 03281

Let's say Thor. Electro and Storm are just not Thunder Gods.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I'm just writing to express my overdue thanks and appreciation for the recent article on the Organized Readers of Comics Associated, which you so graciously included as part of the recent September issue #21 of Marvel VISION. As club President, I was aware of the upcoming article, but still found myself most tickled and pleased to see something about us actually in print. Marvel just shot up several notches in my cool book. Thanks again.

If I may make one point from the article a trifle clearer, I would just like to make it known to any current or potential ORCA members that we are not a club run by one individual. ORCA is a group effort in every sense of the word. The CEO, myself, and the other club officers eagerly welcome any input, suggestions,

ideas, or opinions from anyone choosing to express himself or herself about this crazy industry called comic books. Our web site is open to any interested parties and our newsletter, the now legendary FRESH, is eager for any contributions. Give us a shot. ORCA is here for comic book readers anywhere.

After reading through issue #21, I've also got a few general thoughts, questions, and observations to share. So here goes:

I enjoy STAR TREK UNLIMITED and STAR TREK: THE EARLY VOYAGES. While I miss DC's efforts, I felt it was time for a new company to take a crack at the property and, so far, I've liked what I've seen. Are there any plans to take the Next Gen crew into post "First Contact" continuity? The Enterprise E was a beautiful ship and I'd love to see it in comics. While I do enjoy your classic Star Trek tales set during the original crew's five year mission, part of me thinks that this time period has been pretty well tapped out via various novels and the DC comics effort. What do you think? How about a storyline set after the apparent death of Captain Kirk after he saved the Enterprise B? I'd like to see some Captain Sulu adventures; DC promised a mini-series and never delivered. How about adventures set during the time period before Star Trek II or between Part VI and Generations? There's still a great deal of Classic Trek to explore if you choose to.

A final point raised in the letters page. I would enjoy seeing some Vertigo type stories done with various Marvel characters. Put your stable of magic and supernatural characters to use. I sure something fascinating might come of it.

Dennis Kininger
President, ORCA
1307 Utica St.
Oriskany, NY 13424

Thanks for the letter, Dennis. The ORCA article was a long time coming but it was worth it. Anything to help promote the reading of comics is first in our book.

The Star Trek license continues to provide us with a wealth of new and exciting projects. UNLIMITED #10 will be set in post- "First Contact" continuity while UNLIMITEDs #6 and 7 were both pre- "First Contact." We are currently planning to do a very special bookshelf series tentatively called "The Riker Trilogy." The first issue will contain a foreword by Jonathan Frakes, Riker himself, and all three will feature photo covers. Look for a Captain Sulu adventure in UNLIMITED #8 and an Original Series tale spotlighting both Sulu and Chekov in UNLIMITED #9. Finally there is the UNTOLD VOYAGES limited series set to debut in January. This five-issue series takes place between "Star Trek: The Motion Picture" and "The Wrath of Khan."

Dear INSIGHTS,

Recently I returned to the Marvel Universe after a fifteen year absence from comics. There were many changes since 1982, most notably an abundance of X-Books. I have now purchased at least one issue of every title in your line and am happy to report the Marvel of old is still alive and kicking.

After raiding the back issue bins to catch up on the last few years of continuity, it became apparent that some recent changes have improved your line of comics over what it was merely 1 1/2 to 2 years ago.

What's so different:

Fewer large scale X-overs. They are very exciting when called for, but it seemed every back issue I picked up was part one of four. Or six of eighteen. Only once in a great while does a storyline rate a crossover of these lengths.

More emphasis on characterization, instead of events.

New gatefold covers. They are great for regular readers to recap last month's action and for new ones to become familiar with characters and the storyline.

The return of Stan Lee's Soapbox. Yes!

In closing I would just like to tell the staff of Marvel VISION to keep up the good work. This is truly a great fan magazine. My favorite departments are Daily Bugle, Insights, Marvel Chronicles, and Beast Files. It's good to be back, and as always, Make Mine Marvel.

Terence Connors
241 W. Passaic St. #3B
Rochelle Park, NJ 07662

Thanks for coming back, Terence.

We can point a lot of fingers as to why Marvel might've strayed but it's easy to point out who got us back on the right track. Since he was placed upon the Editor in Chief pedestal, Bob Harras has very carefully guided us editors and encouraged our freelancers to strive for something always just a little better. He was most recently interviewed in VISION #25 so grab a copy if you still can.

Hey, Julio.

What?

Do you think that was too--well, you know?

Do you want to know if you sounded like you were kissing-up?

Yeah.

Totally. Big-time. I was embarrassed for you.

Darn.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I would just like to say how pleased I am with your magazine. I've never missed an issue. If you ask me this magazine is better than WIZARD, COMBO, and PREVIEWS or any other on the market. I follow all your titles except for the X-Titles, which are way too confusing. Well, I do follow one X-Title, WOLVERINE. Before I finish, I would like to ask a few questions:

1) Since Kurt Busiek is going to the AVENGERS and IRON MAN, does that mean he will be leaving THUNDERBOLTS?

2) Is Marvel planning to make a title with all its heavy hitters, sort of like DC's JLA? If you did, it would sell a lot of comics.

3) Are there any plans on putting out new titles?

Warren Coombs
3 Brichwod Place
Saint John, N. B.
Canada E2M 5G4

Kurt Busiek will be staying on THUNDERBOLTS, which all of us around the office are happy to hear. THUNDERBOLTS and AVENGERS are

both edited by Tom Brevoort, who promises that the two teams will definitely cross paths in 1998.

We already have a book of our heavy hitters and it's called AVENGERS.

We are always planning on adding titles and exploring new concepts. Since the VISION office has branched out into comics with the Trek line, we've decided to continue and develop a science fiction line. These books will be based on some classic Marvel stories that haven't been seen in a while as well as all-new concepts from some great sci-fi writers.

And look for MICRONAUTS to return to the shelves in 1998 courtesy of this office as well.

If that's what one office has planned, then you know others are doing the same.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I would like to know if we will see the return of Rick Sheridan and Sleepwalker in a new book or limited series?

Have both characters appeared in any books of late? Maybe Marvel could put them in one of the two new group books?

Dennis Holmes
1048 Wish Circle
East Aurora, NY 14052

Having worked on the entire run of SLEEPWALKER when I was an assistant editor, I can say that there are no plans to bring the Traveller of the Dreamscape back.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I wanted to comment on what a great magazine Marvel VISION is. I especially like the Beast Files, Marvel's Silliest Moments, and Marvel Chronicles. The whole magazine is great, but you're missing one thing, a pen pal section. You should add one and if you do, I would like to be in it.

Among my favorite titles are the X-Titles, HULK, DAREDEVIL, and ELEKTRA. I like all the Marvel hero titles, but those are some of my favorites. I'm 24 years old and I've been wanting to get some pen pals to chat about comics with. I hope you at least consider it.

Robert Turner Jr.
3433 Keith Ave.
Knoxville, TN 37921

Although it's never really been promoted as that, whenever a writer allows us to print his address it seems that he/she would welcome some correspondence from other fans.

If there are fans out there who are seriously interested in a pen pal section, then indicate it on your letters and we'll print your names and addresses in a completely different section after the printed letters and acknowledgments.

Dear INSIGHTS,

Well, I have heard about the plans for Heroes Return. One thing is conspicuously absent--the Mighty Thor. JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY is becoming an anthology title.

Thor will not be resuming his title? Why not? Captain America, Iron Man, FF, and the Avengers will all be resuming their titles. Why not Thor?

Well, I suppose the actual reason is sales. Thor was always a favorite of mine. I recall a rumor about the title being in trouble well before Heroes Reborn. But consider this. I have always thought Thor and the returning titles mentioned above, along with AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and the INCREDIBLE HULK, were the Marvel core titles, reflecting the Marvel Age of comics. As long as they existed, the Marvel Universe created by Stan and Jack was healthy. Now that Thor is gone, the Marvel Age of comics is truly over for me.

Terry M. Hlett
807 Westgate Court
Newport News, VA 23602

Don't despair, Terry. Thor will be making his return to Marvel with Heroes Return and in 1998 he will be getting his own all-new title. This new book will actually be the first time a book titled THOR will have a #1 issue. As you are well aware, the character of Thor debuted in JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY in issue #83. In 1966 the book changed its title to simply THOR but the JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY numbering stayed in effect.

Dear INSIGHTS,

I am writing in response to the letter that Marvel should do mature reader books in the vein of DC's Vertigo. I agree that Marvel characters were not created to be Vertigo type characters.

After just reading the PREACHER SPECIAL, GOOD OLE' BOYS, believe me, I'd rather have the Marvel characters just as they are. I'm sure that Marvel can create stories that appeal to older readers without the incursion of 4-letter words, weird sexual activities, and over the top violence that is prevalent in most of the top mature books.

Perhaps Marvel won't do a mature readers line of titles, but after reading some of the mature reader titles out there, I think I'd stick with the good old Marvel Universe.

As for the comment that Marvel is in a creative slump and that your distinguished competition is kicking Marvel's pants off in creativity, I think that is untrue.

I see a lot of creativity at Marvel. And I see a lot of great, well written, superbly drawn titles in Marvel's comic line. Maybe Marvel doesn't have writers and artists that are considered mega-superstars such as Garth Ennis, Alan Moore, and J. Scott Campbell, but they do have Peter David, Kurt Busiek, Mark Waid, Carlos Pacheco, John Romita Jr., Andy and Adam Kubert, who I feel are being underrated and that is a shame. These fine gentlemen are producing some darn fine comic books that deserve to be read and appreciated. I'm glad that they're working on Marvel titles, and I really enjoy the great work they are doing. It may not be Vertigo type stuff, but the heart and soul put in every book are a testament that they need not be Vertigo type books. The creativity and excellence in the Marvel books are undeniable and should never be questioned. I thank each and every Marvel Maniac for the tremendous effort you put in each and every Marvel title. Congratulations and keep up the good work.

Jon Erin Mundy
101 N. Davis St.
Forest, OH 45843

Jon, you have brought up a subject worthy of its own letters page but we think we'll be able to cover it here, anyway.

The debate raged on for what seemed like years but Marvel has decided to continue pursue a horror line of comics but those comics will be Comics Code approved.

Some of the deciding factors behind this were Marvel's commitment to our readers to produce high quality scary comics that don't need to rely on shock value to get you to buy them. Also key was the fact that in the '70s Marvel put out such top quality books as TOMB OF DRACULA and WEREWOLF BY NIGHT and others which were Code approved.

We're sure that all of the creators that you mentioned who work for Marvel appreciate your recognizing their talent. We recognize it every day, and that's why we continue to use them.

Thanks for writing and e-mailing!

Shane Rozanski
3285 Richmond NW
Walker, MI 49504

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Shahiym Muhammad
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(Marty Charlesworth)

Steve1364@aol.com

UNSUNG HEROES

•Are you or someone you know a mighty Marvel maniac? Would you or someone you know qualify as an Unsung Hero? If so, then in less than 100 words write in and tell us why. Maybe your best friend buys every title Marvel produces each month, or you provide comics for the children's ward at your local hospital. Whatever it is that you consider to be an Unsung Hero, we wanna know!

That's all for this month. We got a lot of internet letters as evidenced by this month's writers list. All are appreciated but please, in the future if you'd like your letter to be considered for publication, do not e-mail me a novel. The majority of e-mails received last month were five pages and over. While the views presented are interesting the length makes them difficult to impossible to edit and print. Please be concise and we'll be more than happy to print your letter.

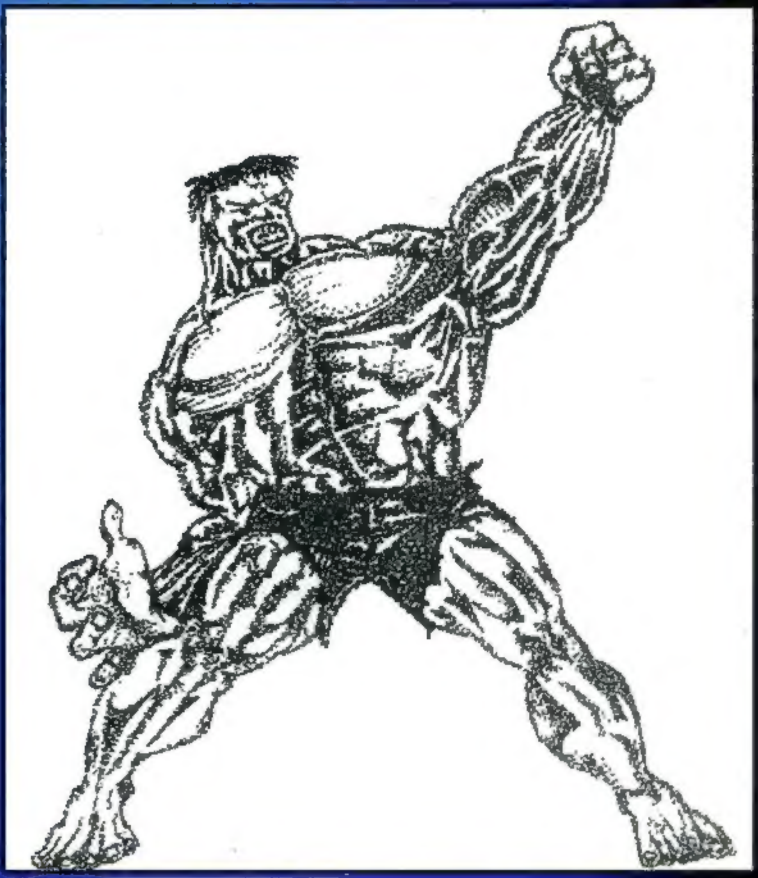
**Write in to: Marvel VISION Insights c/o Marvel Comics
387 Park Avenue South
New York NY 10016.
Or E-Mail to: TIMM2E@ aol.com
Addresses will be withheld at the writer's request.**

Next Month: The results of the Mighty Marvel Media Contest. How many did you get right?

VISION

FAN ART

Paul Tutrone Age:2



Catherine Civello Age: 17

Tim Smith Age: 3 1/2

Gregg Schigiel : Age 97

X WILD PECTATIONS

As the Earth spins ever closer to the sun in the waning months of winter, let your eyes rotate gently in their reddened sockets until finally, in March, they come to rest on a large, thick, satisfying-looking comic, one with a brilliantly painted cover and a cumbersome title that belies the fast-paced action awaiting you inside. Feast your bleary orbs on the crown jewel of crossovers that is STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION/X-MEN (hereafter referred to by its more humane interior title, "Second Contact"!).

Yes, the House of Ideas has once again joined forces with that paragon of explosive properties, Paramount, to bring together the crew of Star Trek: The Next Generation and the classic members of the all-new X-Men for the first time ever... but in such a way as to bind together, rather than destroy, each group's particular continuity! The two teams must venture to critical times in their respective histories, and find that they must both unravel the mystery behind a hideous dilemma in order to return to their proper times — and of course, save the universe in the process!

Written by the now-fabled tag team of Dan Abnett and Ian Edginton, and featuring the unmistakably awesome art of reality-master Cary Nord, "Second Contact" picks up directly where the Star Trek movie "First Contact" left off! "I realized that it was the most logical time that (the two teams) would be able to meet," explains editor Tim Tuohy, who modestly admitted at least a dozen times to having come up with the book's concept himself. "The crew of the Enterprise had already traveled back in time to save the future, and I figured that I could explain that the ship was damaged and when they tried to go back home, they wound up going back even further in time!" Specifically, they travel all the way back to 1998!

After a few thwarted attempts to find the means to fix their damaged deflector dish (and a brush with the Thunderbolts!), the Enterprise away team scans the X-mansion. Then, finding that adoptable alien technology appears to be inside, they promptly break and enter!

"There's a brief scuffle between Geordi and Wolverine, and between Colossus and Data," says Tim when asked about the possibility of phasers being drawn. "That's as far as it goes before they realize that there's a larger problem at hand that needs to be dealt with." The "problem" turns out to be the Marvel Universe's time-traveling despot, Kang! "Dimensions are Kang's cup of tea," elaborates Dan. "Having him as the villain helped us explain the fact that the Enterprise returned to an alternate time, which happened to be the perfect time to fit this story into X-Men continuity." The conniving Kang has set up a challenge wherein both groups must discover and accordingly deal with an anomaly which, if not solved properly, will strand the Enterprise back in the past — or worse yet, erase the universe that we know!

Pairing everyone's favorite new X-Men with the cast of TNG "gave us some wonderful opportunities, in terms of both continuity and character," cackles Dan. "For example, after the struggle in the X-mansion, one of the Trek crew explains that they're from the starship Enterprise, and Wolvy says, "Do you know Captain Kirk?" The feral 'n' feisty X-Man, along with teammate Storm, met the suave, classic-era Enterprise captain in the pages of the first STAR TREK/X-MEN, which paired the X-Men team of Cyclops, Storm, Jean Grey, Beast, Gambit, Bishop and Wolverine with the original series Trek crew. But as far as Dan and Tim are concerned, the Next Generation crew and the modern X-Men are a more compatible match.

"Despite the fact that the crew obviously worked together as a team, Kirk was still very much the leader in the original series," says Dan. "He was the main focal point. Sometimes they'd do a Spock story or something, but it was really Kirk's show. I think the Next Generation series presented the crew more evenly, as more of an ensemble, the way the X-Men are presented. When TNG was on TV, you were just as happy to see a Deanna story as a Data story or a Geordi story or a Picard story." But though that lovin' feeling is being retained in the pages of "Second Contact," Dan feels that it has been lost since the series' television run ended. "Since they started doing just the movies, Next Gen is becoming more like original Trek, where the stories tend to focus on a few main characters like Picard and Data."

Not so in the pages of ST: TNG/X-MEN II! Edginton and Abnett took special care to blend the two groups in such a way as to generate the most sparks. "We took the core teams and shuffled them," says Dan. "That way we get to see Picard and Deanna teaming up with Colossus and Nightcrawler. Storm with Data, and, my favorite, Wolverine with Worf! Riker and everyone else — Beverly, Angel, Banshee and Kitty — form the 'home team'." But the blending doesn't just stop with the good guys! "You'll notice that there are Borg-like elements on the Sentinels, and the Borg start to have these sentinel-like powers," says Dan. How's that for production value?

"The point of 'Second Contact' is not to have the two teams meet, fight and then say, 'Oh, hey, you're just like us.' One of the best things about this book is the conversation, and the way everybody interacts. For example, there's a scene where Wolverine and Worf are walking down a hall together and Wolvy pops his claws. Worf looks down and says admiringly, 'Nice claws!' Or there's the scene where Colossus tries to punch Data, and Data stops him just by putting out a hand. That's how powerful he is!"

When he wasn't pondering the comparative strengths of Data and Colossus, Dan was busy trying to figure out how to split up the crossover's writing duties with his friend and writing partner, Ian Edginton. The two currently write several books together, including STAR TREK: EARLY VOYAGES and STAR TREK: UNLIMITED, taking turns with the plotting and scripting. "Second Contact," being just one book, presented a slight problem. "We had to have someone hold our coats while we fought about who did what," jokes Dan. Though both agreed that the real joy would be scripting the book, neither wanted to be cheated out of plotting out the final course of Tim's idea. Finally, it was agreed that Dan would plot the half that Ian scripted, and vice versa. "It seemed sensible to share!" admits Dan.

The man who really had it all to himself on this project was penciler Cary Nord. "Cary is a saint," moans Tim. "Choirs of angels sing over his house!" "He's really done a very impressive job," agrees Dan. "He's got quite a realistic style, which suited the Trek half of the book.

It was also exciting to see (Nord and inker Scott Koblish) render the X-Men more as actors, as people, rather than in a regular super hero style. And it's also pretty great seeing the Star Trek crew in 1990's civvies!"

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION/X-MEN II features 58 pages of Cary's cornea-popping art, as well as a painted cover by the legendary Vince Evans and a behind-the-scenes look at putting a project like this together! Scheduled to hit the stands in late March, we guarantee this stand-alone issue will please fans of Star Trek and the X-Men alike! "The book is extremely faithful to both properties," promises Tim. "You'll feel like this could easily be the continuation of First Contact!" If that's not 'nuff said, we don't know what is!

—Polly Watson

CONSPIRACY theories

The gamma bomb that spawned the Incredible Hulk. The cosmic rays that bombarded the Fantastic Four. The toxic canister spillage that blinded Daredevil. The radioactive spider that bit Spider-Man. All these accidents were the result of the Fates playing Russian roulette with humanity again, right? Well, not exactly. Instead, there may have been something sinister underfoot, setting a nefarious scheme into motion. True believers, leave your JFK theories behind and get ready for November's high octane two-issue thriller, CONSPIRACY, and witness everything you thought you knew about the Marvel Universe unravel.

"The main thrust of the storyline is a kind of gradual revelation of an extraordinary X-Filesque conspiracy that links together the component elements of the classic Marvel universe," explains writer Dan Abnett. "But, rather than it being this place full of wonders that has happened spontaneously and individually, or having given birth to a place where all these adventures occur, there is an ulterior plan going on."

A mystery? Call Scooby-Doo™ and the gang! Not available? Guess it will be up to the Daily Bugle's Mark Ewing to uncover the truth. Every journalist dreams of the earth-shattering, award-winning, Watergate scandal story and Peter Parker's colleague, Ewing, is no exception. Better watch what you wish for there, bud. One day while slaving away at his desk, literally wanting a story to drop into his lap, a battle between a super hero and villain erupts outside the building. In the ensuing slugfest, Ewing is almost killed and the Daily Bugle building is damaged.

When all the dust finally clears, Ewing discovers an envelope with notes and photographs hidden in a secret wall panel uncovered in the fight. The papers inside contain evidence suggesting an organization named Control was responsible for the creation of today's super heroes and you can bet the farm it wasn't for the good of mankind. Apparently, this was his predecessor's last case before he mysteriously disappeared. Obsessed with making sense of the documentation, Ewing begins to dig deeper into the situation beginning in the newspaper's

archives for information on his predecessor.

"He finds out this guy was one of the journalistic greats and knew all the Golden Age characters," reveals Abnett. "There's also a safety deposit box key in the envelope which sends Ewing off to Mexico to that box."

However, the contents of the box only lead to further globe-trotting and more twists and turns than a winding road. As Ewing peels back the layers of subterfuge, he realizes the nature of the beast is bigger than he imagined. And all of his snooping around doesn't go unnoticed either as he becomes a thorn in "their" side. He begins to be stalked and while some people threaten him against continuing his quest, others encourage him that "it's really important you do." Eventually, as Ewing gets closer to the answers, things get dangerously out of hand when his shadow cabinet of foes attempt to kidnap him. This progresses into a high speed chase in flying S.H.I.E.L.D. cars.

Unfortunately for Ewing, despite all the proof, legwork and bruises he accumulates, his speculations fall on deaf ears. This far-fetched concoction appears to be more tabloid trash than groundbreaking news. Or is that what they want him to think? "No one believes him," says editor Kelly Corvese. "It goes along the same lines as X-Files-Trust No One. With that whole idea, this book is really timely."

Adding fuel to the conflict, one thing that quickly becomes apparent to Ewing is he truly has nowhere to turn for a safe haven and no one to confide in. Everyone has their roots embedded in the conspiracy. Abnett concurs with Corvese, saying even heroes such as Reed Richards and super secret agencies such as S.H.I.E.L.D. may have hidden agendas. "It's sort of good guys turn out to bad guys and bad guys turn out to be good guys. Or are they? It's an exercise in extreme paranoia."

As for the identity of the villain behind all the James Bond top secret mayhem, Abnett refuses to point fingers, only hinting there are at least three or four likely candidates. "I think the pleasure of the reading, if there is any, is turning the page and going...gee, I never...."

For anyone not already caught up in all this compelling intrigue, call the eye doctor 'cause those pupils are gonna sear

once they catch a glimpse of the art. In the tradition of MARVELS, artist Igor Kordey has beautifully painted the one-shot. Corvese and Abnett both agree the fan-favorite "MARVELS" approach adds a credibility and sense of this is more than just costume characters on a page, this is real life in your backyard.

"It kinda falls into that MARVELS category because it does look at the Marvel Universe from someone else's point of view," says Corvese. "The story itself could be considered a What If or Strange Tales type. It doesn't really follow the natural Marvel Universe storyline."

As for a clear-cut resolution wrapped in a nice red bow, hey, this is a conspiracy! It's not quite that simple! Ewing does develop what he considers an airtight theory but is it the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

"Was all that information the ramblings of some deranged idiot or actual fact?" poses Abnett. "Whether it is true or not, it is up to the discretion of the reader."

Ha! You can't fool me! Malevolent organizations? Conspiracies? It's as real as Mel Gibson's latest flick. Chalk it up to an overactive imagination. Oh, just one second, the doorbell rang. Hey! Hey! Who are you guys? You can't just barge in here like that! What do you want? The Marvel editors have been replaced by clones? The Heroes Return artistic teams are would-be alien conquerors? No, I don't know anything about those! THIS IS JUST AN ARTICLE ON CONSPIRACIES! IT'S ALL FICTION! HEY, WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?

HEEEEELLLLLLLLLPPPPPPP!!!!!!!!

By Bryan Cairns

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Say hello to life in the fast lane. Sonic R for Sega Saturn is a full-on pedal-to-the-metal hi-speed dash through five 3D courses, each rendered in full 360 degree panoramas. Choose from 5 different Sonic characters to race. Uncover hidden characters and secret shortcuts along the way. Whether you race tag team, relay or split-screen against your buddy is your call. You'll be flossing bug guts out of your teeth for weeks. Yum.
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Weather
Today very cold, highs only near 25. Tonight mostly cloudy, with a chance of snow, lows in the upper teens.

DAILY BUGLE®

IN THIS ISSUE
Beauty and brawn. Excerpts from her new book: "It's Not Easy Being Green: My Life as She-Hulk"
Page B1

December 10, 1997 | New York's Finest Daily Newspaper | Fifty Cents

Staff Photo Chuck Giambalvo

SPIDER-MAN: MURDERER?!?

Jan Parsec -UPI

It's a headline that's graced the nation's newspapers more than once over the years, but it seemed to come shockingly true yesterday when an unidentified corpse was discovered, and the prime suspect is Spider-Man.

In the early morning hours, police were alerted to a possible dead body by an unidentified caller. Upon their arrival at the scene, the police discovered that the individual, a man in his mid-forties, was indeed dead. Most disturbing, however, was an on-the-spot report that the man had died of asphyxiation after choking on a sticky chemical substance markedly similar to Spider-Man's webbing. A formal forensics report confirmed that the substance was indeed the vigilante's trademark webbing, which he uses to apprehend criminals and swing from building to building. Police were unable to identify the victim, though they described him as a "homeless derelict," and hinted that he might have a criminal record.

Spider-Man has long shared a tenuous relationship with both the city and government officials. Numerous times local law enforcement has been organized in hopes of capturing him with the aim of proving or disproving his supposed crimes. While the majority of the media has branded Spider-Man a criminal, he's apparently proven time and again that he is a hero with the public's best interests at heart, his vigilante status notwithstanding. Yet, for every good action there has been a negative or at least suspect action, and this latest incident certainly qualifies.

The police commissioner was reticent to comment on the matter, citing the investigation as being in its formative stages and the mayor's office refused to return our calls.

—Continued in PETER PARKER, SPIDER-MAN #88

J. Jonah Jameson

IF IT WERE ONLY NICE TO BE RIGHT

I've spent years of my life trying to warn the public about the danger posed by Spider-Man. Countless hours (and massive overtime costs) re-plating the front page of the Bugle whenever he committed some new transgression, or worse yet, constructed various phony alibis to cover his tracks. I've done the lecture circuit, sent out enough investigative reporters to get to the bottom of Whitewater, and printed enough incriminating photos to conclusively prove that Spider-Man is a menace to society. And yet until today, no one believed me.

But the arrest warrant issued yesterday evening by the New York City Police Department for Spider-Man's involvement in a homicide may have proved conclusively that the vigilante without a good cause probably had no good cause to begin with. It seems that this outlaw hero killed a man by suffocating him with his mysterious spider-webbing. Apparently, he filled the man's throat, nasal passageways, and lungs with the stuff. Cold. Brutal. Calculated. Intentional. Are these the actions of a hero? How can he or his misguided followers justify these actions? Blame it on that other Spider-Man from the bad side of town?

I wish I could tell you it feels good to be proven correct. I wish I could describe to you in glowing detail feelings of vindication, and how the humiliation of proving countless retractions has been removed. But it doesn't work that way.

An innocent man died at Spider-Man's hands. We don't yet know who he was. Maybe he was a criminal. Maybe he was just a regular Joe like you and me. We may never know.

What we do know is that by giving his life, he may have done more to safeguard this city from Spider-Man than I could ever have accomplished. The flames of outcry over this man's death may be the spark that finally ignites a national response to the menace of Spider-Man and those like him who would take the law into their own hands. We can only pray that will be the case. Otherwise, this man, whose name we don't even know, will have died for naught.

AVENGERS RE-ASSEMBLE

Maury Toeitch -BUGLE

For months, this venerable building on Park Avenue has stood silent. Since the supposed death of the world's greatest heroes at the hands of Onslaught, Avengers Mansion, a stately mansion replete with stone monuments to its inhabitants, has remained deathly quiet, reflecting the sense of loss the world feels.

As you enter this venerable hall of fame of heroes, you can't help but notice the portraits adorning the halls, reflecting on an age of Camelot, when heroes of all nationalities and backgrounds gathered together to fight for a common cause: the protection of humankind and the betterment of the planet. And yet, what is most striking are the long shadows cast down the hallways by the sunlight, drawing attention to the emptiness where heroes once resided.

In the long months since the Avengers apparently charged into their final battle, the world has mourned, and slowly but surely moved on. Is it any surprise, then, that as the heroes of the world miraculously returned several weeks ago, these halls have slowly but surely come to life again?

From the moment the Fantastic Four went on national television to announce their safe return, it was inevitable that the Avengers would return as well. Today, that moment arrived.

After several weeks of terse "no comments" from the Avengers' butler and public spokesman, Jarvis, yesterday Giant-Man and the Wasp arrived at the mansion, sparking rumors that the team would gather to announce their re-formation, just as they came before cameras years ago to announce that they had joined forces to combat the evils of the world. But there was no announcement, no press briefing. Iron Man was next to arrive, jetting over the growing throng of reporters and then declining comment on the situation at hand. It wasn't until the arrival of Captain America that the real excitement began. When pressed on whether the Avengers were here to regroup or simply to pack up their personal belongings, Cap said, "So long as there is evil in the world, the Avengers will be there, one way or another." He declined further comment.

At press time, the Avengers had still not released any statement. However, Captain America's comments, coupled with the fact that the Avengers on hand had still not left the premises, indicated to many that the team would indeed be returning to active status. Speculation surfaced that these longstanding Avengers were coming up with a team roster, leading to much public debate on who would be on the team and who would not.

—Continued in AVENGERS #1

GEORGE of the Golden Age Jungle!

George Tuska has been drawing since before there even were comic books! Now retired, the eighty-something Mr. Tuska (he's a little shy about his age!) was one of Marvel's most prolific talents during the '60s and '70s. Among the titles he put pencil to were the original X-MEN, HULK, CAPTAIN AMERICA, and more than seventy issues of IRON MAN! Now, the man who put the "Invincible" in Iron Man gives us the lowdown on a career that spans six decades!

George Tuska first became interested in drawing while recuperating from an appendix operation in the Hartford, CT hospital where he had been born eight years earlier. George revealed, "An elderly patient showed me how to draw Uncle Sam, cowboys, and Indians. I was fascinated."

That fascination in art led George to attend the National Academy of Design in New York City, where he studied life drawing and oil painting. Asked to name his primary artistic influences, George said, "I was very much interested in illustrators Harold Von Schmidt, Dean Cornwell, and Remington."

George landed his first professional job, working for Will Eisner's studio in 1939. George recalled, "I drew the characters of Shark Brodie and Spike Marlin for Eisner and Iger." George's work appeared in many comics from many different publishers. One of the comics he drew starred a crime-fighter known as Uncle Sam! Looks like hospital art lessons paid off!

During this period, George had encounters with two future Marvel greats. "Jack Kirby and I were in the same art school together! And I met Stan Lee, who was then an editor for Timely Publications, when I showed him samples of my work. (Timely is the original name of Marvel Comics!)"

George's comic art career was temporarily interrupted in 1941 when he was drafted into the army, where he served at Ft. Jackson, in Columbia, SC, drawing artillery plans for army manuals. After losing the hearing in his left ear due to a training accident, George received a medical discharge in 1943.

From there, he dove right back into comics, working steadily for the next decade and a half for a number of publishers, including Fiction House, Street & Smith, Fawcett, and DC. During this period, George became known for his outstanding work on crime comics, notably a title called CRIME DOES NOT PAY.

Many comics artists, such as John Buscema and Gene Colan, found themselves out of work when the industry took a downward turn in the '50s. George was fortunate enough that even though there was no work to be had doing comic books, he was able to find work in a very similar field.

"When comic books became slack in the '50s, I worked for the Associated Press, drawing (the newspaper strip) Scorchy Smith." George wrote and drew the daily and Sunday adventures of Scorchy, a treasure-hunting adventurer. To this day, George considers it his favorite project. "Some years later, I got into doing Buck Rogers for the National Newspaper Syndicate of Chicago." In the late 1970s, George wound up drawing another daily strip, this one featuring a certain Man of Steel!

In the mid-sixties, as his comic strip work wound down, George called Stan Lee to inquire about working for Marvel and was welcomed with open arms. George's first art job for Marvel was a Captain America story in TALES OF SUSPENSE #70. Stan could hardly contain his enthusiasm as he raved about George in the credits box: "Reintroducing the matchless artistry of one of the giants of the great golden age of comics...GEORGE TUSKA!"

Over the next few years, George notes, "I drew just about all the Marvel heroes. Somehow, I got latched on to Iron Man. It became my favorite series." George drew over seventy issues of IRON MAN, including the infamous issues where Tony Stark added a nose to ol' Shell-Head's helmet! Today, George is considered one of the definitive Iron Man artists, alongside such greats as Don Heck, John Romita Jr., and Bob Layton!

George continued to work for Marvel throughout the '70s and '80s on such titles as DAREDEVIL and GHOST RIDER. His final job for the company was the adaptation of the HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE movie in 1987. After more than fifty years in the business, George decided it was time to master his own universe and

ease into retirement.

Though no longer drawing comics professionally, George still dabbles in comic art. "I draw comic book covers, colored in poster style." His other hobbies include golf and painting.

George has not been an active member of the comics community for a decade now, but he recently chose to accept an invitation to one of America's largest conventions, the ComicCon International in San Diego. He admitted to some reservations about going. "I hadn't been to a convention in years. I just didn't know what the outcome would be." But his worries proved groundless, as fans were delighted to finally have the chance to meet him.

Retirement allows George to spend more time with his family. "My wife, Dorothy, and I have been married for almost fifty years." They have three children, one of whom is also an artist, who paints in a modern style and covers walls with murals.

George said that the types of comic book stories he most enjoyed drawing included "super heroes...space stories on other planets...and gangsters and crime." Asked if there was one character he most wanted to draw that he never had, George answered, "I've just about done most of them. But I've thought of Tarzan."

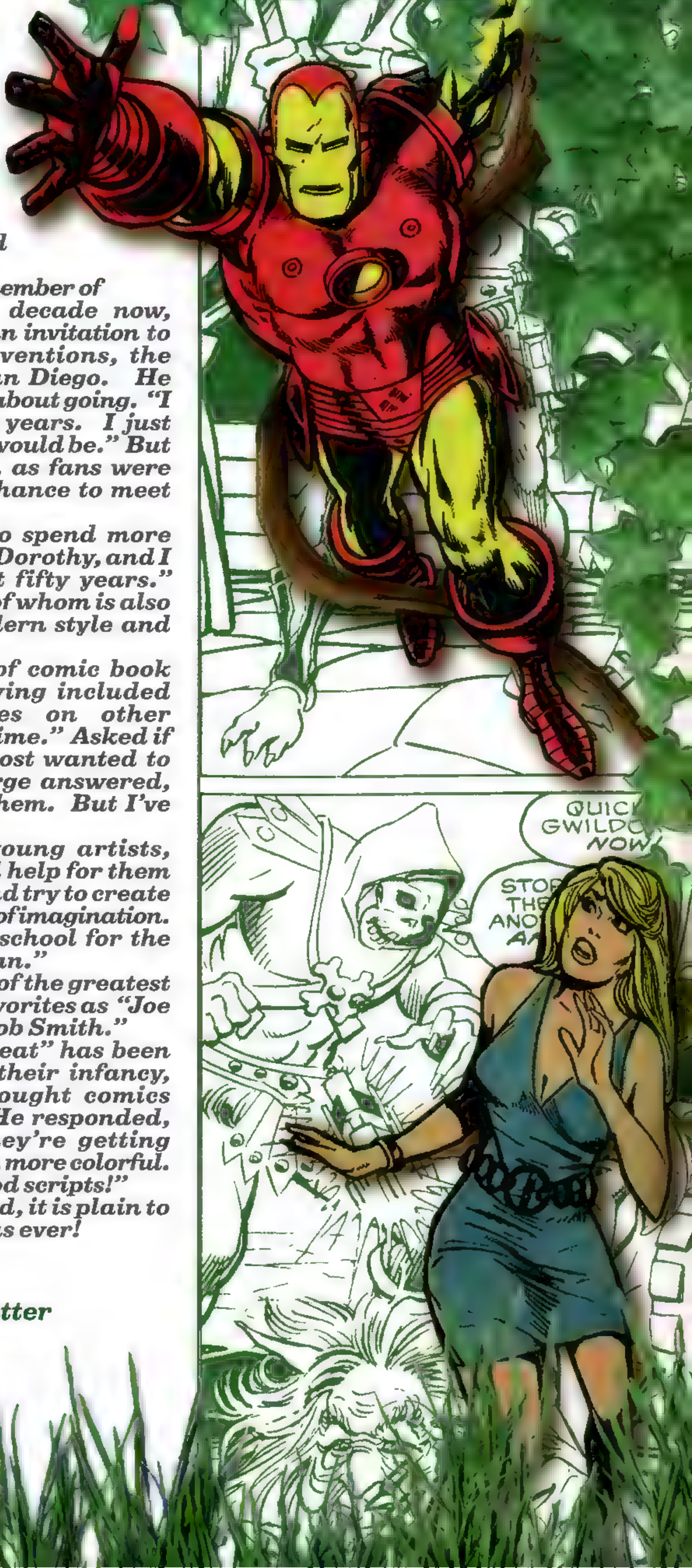
As for advice to aspiring young artists, George recommends, "It would help for them to study several comic books, and try to create a hero in their own style, with lots of imagination. There wasn't any comic book school for the creators of Superman or Batman."

George has worked with some of the greatest inkers in comics. He lists his favorites as "Joe Sinnott, Frank Giacoia, and Bob Smith."

Because this "Golden Age Great" has been around since comics were in their infancy, we asked George how he thought comics had changed over the years. He responded, "They've changed a lot! They're getting stronger. They are more vibrant, more colorful. They've got good action and good scripts!"

Even though George has retired, it is plain to see that he is just as invincible as ever!

Barry Dutter



marvel's unsung heroes

jesse falcon

Date of Birth: 1/17/1971
Occupation: Product Manager at Toy Biz
First Appeared in the Marvel Toy Biz Universe: as Assistant to Creative Director
Base of Operations: New York
Dual Identities: "The Wief"
Known Confidants: Josh Falcon (brother), Lori Hamlin (girlfriend), Phil Ramerez (toy sculptor), Damon Nee (Toy Biz designer), Carlos Lopez (Toy Biz product manager)
Major Enemies: VCRs that eat tapes
Hero Status Verification: Has been involved with most of the current Marvel Universe toy lines including X-Men, X-Men 2099, Hulk, Spider-Man, and Generation X

What's it like working at a toy company?
It's like Christmas every day for Santa's little helpers. It really is a lot of fun. Every day when the FedEx delivery comes in we all huddle around to see what came in. Whether it's a new inventor concept or a video reel from a TV show that they want us to make toys out of or a SCI-FI movie package, at least one of us receives something cool every day.

What does a Product Manager do exactly?
Everyone here gets involved in the creation of a toy line but it's the individual product manager's job to think up the concept and get it designed, developed, tested, sent to Hong Kong to be built, and then produced.

Who designs the figures?
We have a lot of in-house designers that do great work for us but when possible we like to get the comic book artists working on the actual comics involved as well. In the past, we've had Steve Skroce work a number of different Spider-Man and X-Men designs, as well as Joe Madureira, Carlos Pacheco, and Salvador Larocca. Their involvement helps establish the figures' legitimacy in the collectors' eyes.

What's the toughest part of your job?
The waiting. It's a long process. To design a line of figures usually takes 9 months from start to finish.

How do you go about deciding what new toys will be made?
We look at what's happening with the exposure of certain characters. That usually relies heavily on who has made an appearance in the TV shows or been more prominent in recent comics. We do our best to weigh it properly so that when a toy appears on the shelf, fans are able to recognize it right away.

What is the one skill that makes you good at what you do?
My uncanny ability to power nap.

What were your favorite toys when you were growing up?
I wanted X-Men toys when I was a kid but the only thing that was around were the Dungeons and Dragons lead X-figures. Those were cool but my very favorites were the Mego 8-inch action figures. They had real clothes and good likenesses.

How did you get into the toy makin' business?
I started as an intern in the Direct Sales department at Marvel in 1992. Then, when I graduated from school, I worked for Heroes World for a while. From there I got a job at Toy Biz as Assistant to the Creative Director. I did that for about a year before being hired as a junior product manager and I've been working in that sector ever since.

Comics have been around for many years but only now are comic-related toys really beginning to take off. Why is that?
I think it's because toys have really changed recently. They're much more edgy than ever before. If you look at the first X-Men line and the current one, the quality has increased 200%. I think toys have become a lot more interesting even in the past three years.

What do you do in your spare time to relax?
I watch Steve Bunche movies. (For a Steve Bunche I.D. refresher, check out the 'Around The Office' installment in VISION #21)

Which is your favorite figure out of the entire line of Marvel Universe toys?
I really love the monster figures. I think my favorite is the Monster Spider from the Spider-Man web trap.

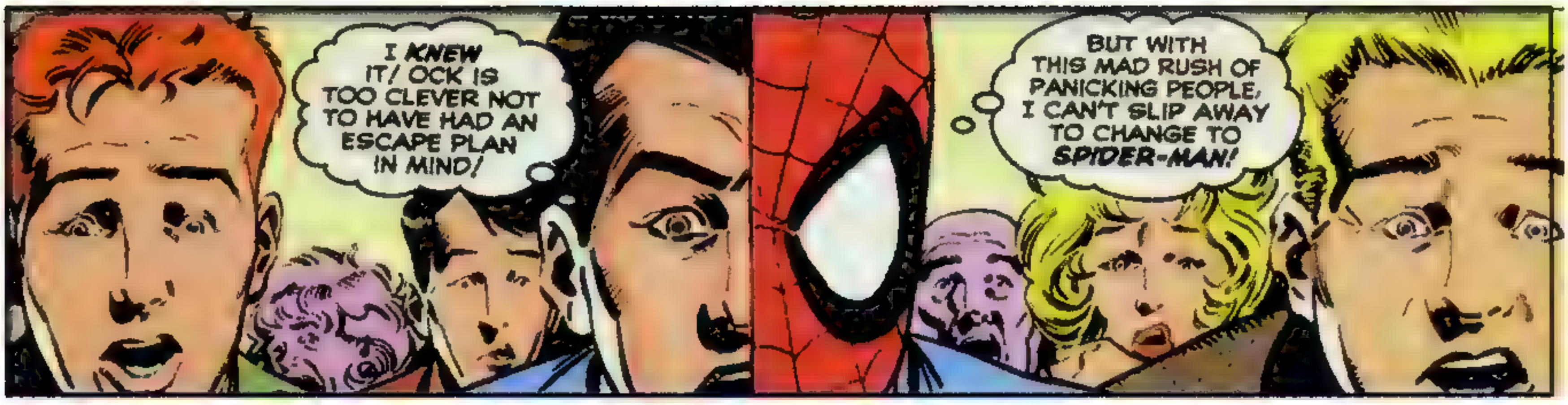
What Marvel character would you like to see made into an action figure?
Arnim Zola. He's a really old villain. Instead of a head, he's got an antenna. His face starts at his collar bone and his chin ends at his pelvis. He's really freaky.

If they were to make an action figure of you, what accessories would you come with?
I wouldn't come with any accessories. Instead, I would come packaged in a 2 liter container of Mountain Dew.

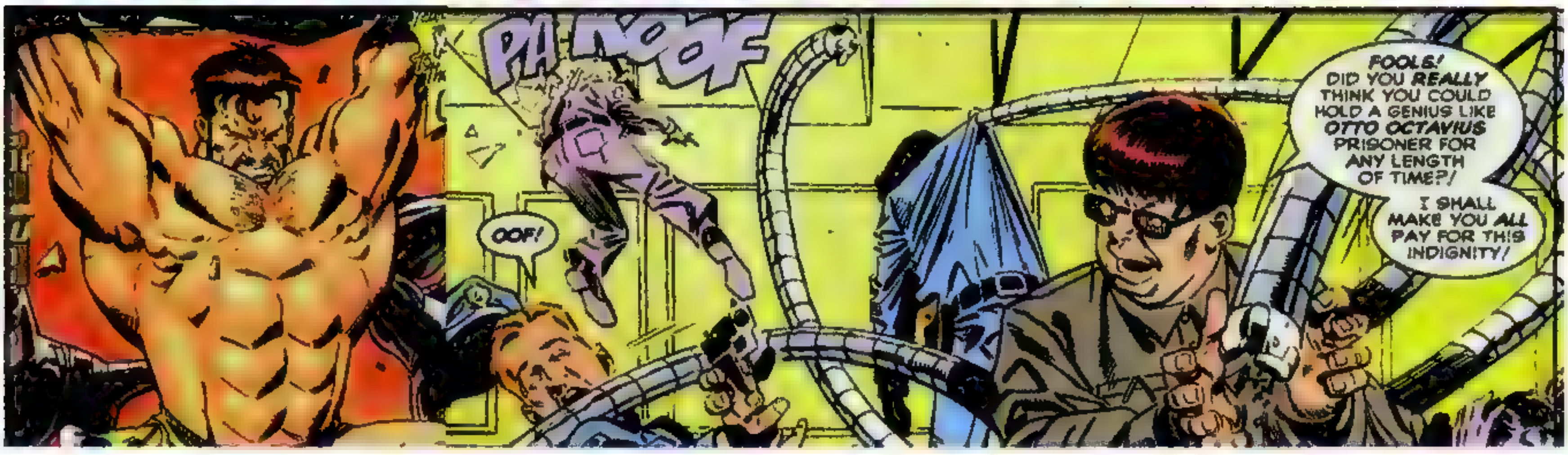
Who are your heroes?
Yasushi Nirasawa (Sculptor), Stan Lee, Alexanderov Jordowski (Director), and my dad.

—Robert Piotrowski

I'LL NEVER FORGET THE DAY I LOST MY EYE...
WAH-HOOo!!
A MINI MARVEL
BY Ribs
STARRING SGT. FURY AND HIS HOWLING COMMANDOS!!!
BELGIUM, 1944
O.K. HOWLERS, DIG IN!!!
WE'LL SHOW THOSE KRAUTS WHAT'S WHAT!!
BUT I ALSO LIKE THE SAURKRAUT, FRIEND DUM-DUM
ERIC'S RIGHT! WE CAN'T LET A FEW RATZIS RUIN ALL OF GERMANY!!
THOUGH I PREFER GEFILTE FISH!
I ONCE SOCKED A GUY LIKE THIS IN A MOVIE I MADE WITH BETTY GRABLE!
HEYA, DINO! HEAH COME OUR REIN-FOACEMENTS... AH DECLAHE! IT'S McGIVENEY'S MAULAHS!!
ACH!
BOOM!!
I SAY, RAWTHER THAN FIGHT AMONGST OUR-SELVES, LET'S FINISH OFF THOSE BLOODY JERRIES, WOT?!
WAH-HOOO!!
WE ALL GOT 'EM ON THE RUN! YEE-HAW!!
I MAY NOT BE FROM THE SOUTH, BUT JUST FOR REB, I'LL PLAY A FEW BARS OF "DIXIE"!
RAUS
SCHNELL!
"AWRITE, HOWLERS!! HIT THE SHOWERS!"
GUESS WE MADE IT THROUGH THAT ONE O.K., EH, DUM DUM?
HEADS UP, NICKY!
WHAP!! YOWCH!



THE PAT OLLIFFE INTERVIEW



When new talent first breaks into the comic business, their career usually follows a normal chain of events; or as the highbrows call it, a "career evolution." First off you'll need a little luck. Secondly, if you show initiative and make some friends (translated: if you meet ALL deadlines and don't tick anyone off), you'll eventually get a dream book and even get some positive recognition from your fans and peers. Pat Olliffe has followed this well known path. He's proven himself as a popular artist and a true professional in the field. Recently Marvel VISION spoke with Pat to get all the details on his "career evolution" so far.

When did it all start for you, Pat?

Well, after my father met my mother...

Whoa...a little too far in the Wayback Machine! Let's rephrase the question by saying, "When did it all start for you as a comic book artist?"

Oh, okay...Well, after I finished art school I sent out some sample pages to Marvel and DC and received the standard rejection letters. I heard of a small black and white comic book company called Malibu Comics, who later became Eternity and then switched back to Malibu. They did like my stuff and I got some work through them. I started bouncing around in the independents after that.

You've been freelancing at Marvel for awhile now. How long has it been?

I've been at Marvel for about six years. Getting in basically happened this way...I used to work at a small animation studio in Pittsburgh. They did some big jobs like a video for Tom Petty and a couple of Christmas specials. I then met Ron Frenz at the studio and showed him some of my pages which he passed along to Ralph Macchio. My first Marvel assignment was penciling a Tales of Asgard backup story.

Tales of Asgard eventually got me the job as penciler on the NOMAD book, which I did for about a year. I also drew, and inked a bit of, the THOR CORPS limited series. Some other things were the last few issues of SHE-HULK which led me to WARLOCK AND THE INFINITY WATCH. With the Warlock book, that was one of the first times people started to recognize my work. I inked a couple of issues of that series also.

Even though you can competently handle both jobs, do you consider yourself first and foremost a penciler?

Yeah, primarily...When I was working on some of the projects for the independents I would ink my own work. But, once I started to get more work at Marvel, I wanted to bill myself exclusively as a penciler. I was kind of apprehensive about touting myself as a penciler and an inker. I wanted to do the penciling more so I decided to pursue that first. As time went by, and I gained some reputation as a penciler, I started to branch out more as an inker.

I had originally planned and hoped to ink my own work. Editors are often a little bit nervous with this because it's always a deadline "red flag." Only recently has it been that I've been inking other

people.

Speaking of other people...Who did you admire when you were drawing as a kid?

The person that's my biggest influence overall is Neal Adams. When I was younger and I had just started collecting comics, a friend of my Dad's showed me an issue of the AVENGERS. It was Neal Adams inked by Tom Palmer and I just could not believe the artwork. It was just so gorgeous I thought, "This is incredible!" It was right then that I was hooked.

As I got older I liked to study John Buscema and John Byrne. Around the time I was in art school Frank Miller and Bill Sienkiewicz were doing some really amazing work. Bill's work on MOON KNIGHT and NEW MUTANTS was absolutely stunning. He had a real knack for bringing mainstream illustration into comics.

Did you ever try to draw like Neal Adams?

Not really...It was never a goal of mine to work at Continuity because I drew exactly like Neal. I basically study other artists and incorporate that into my own style.

Lately we've come to see you working on Spider-Man quite a bit. First there was UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN which carried you right over to MARVEL TEAM-UP.

That's right...I did some Spider-Man trading card work for Tom Brevoort and Glenn Greenberg. I guess the art I handed in on the cards gave them the notion to call me for UNTOLD TALES OF SPIDER-MAN. It was that title that allowed me to really click with the character. Since then, I find that I have a better time with characters who are more reality-based. You know, a real city with real people...that sort of thing. That's why I enjoyed working with Kurt Busiek on UNTOLD TALES so much. The stories were a lot of fun.

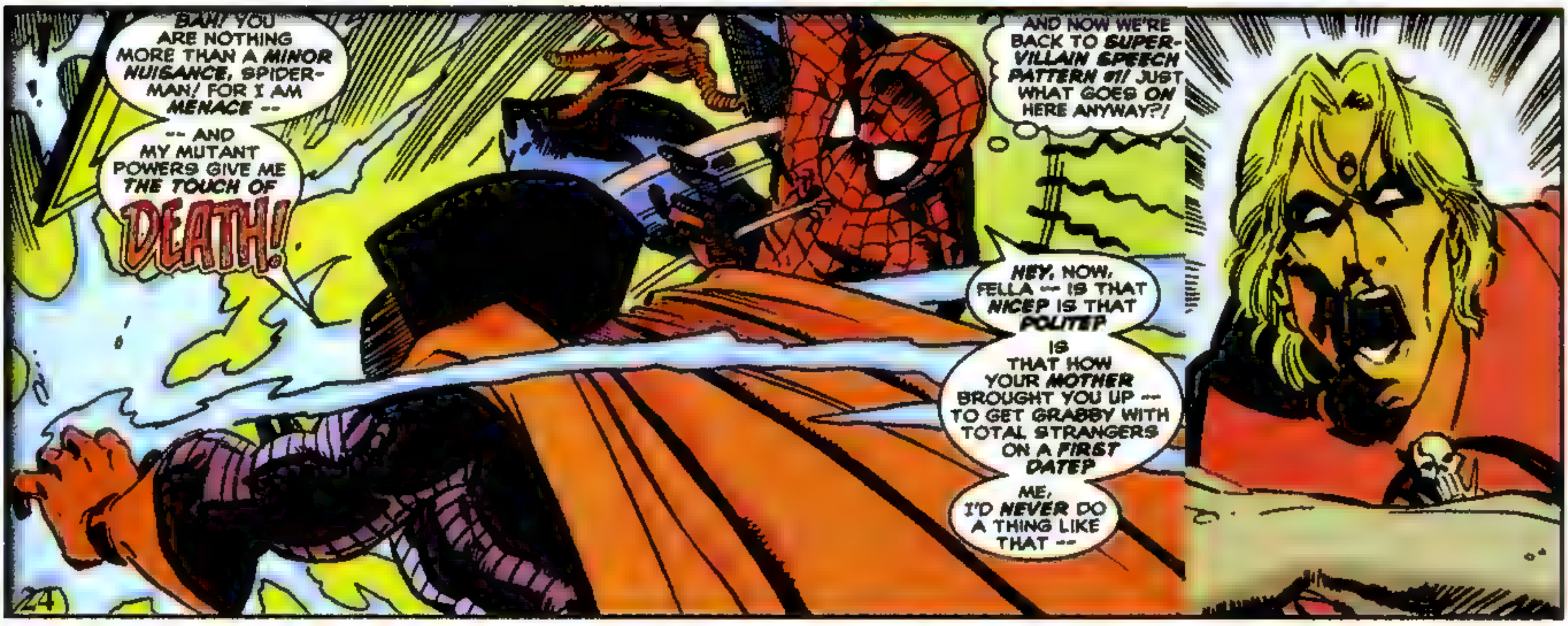
You sound like you initially didn't feel comfortable drawing the Webslinger.

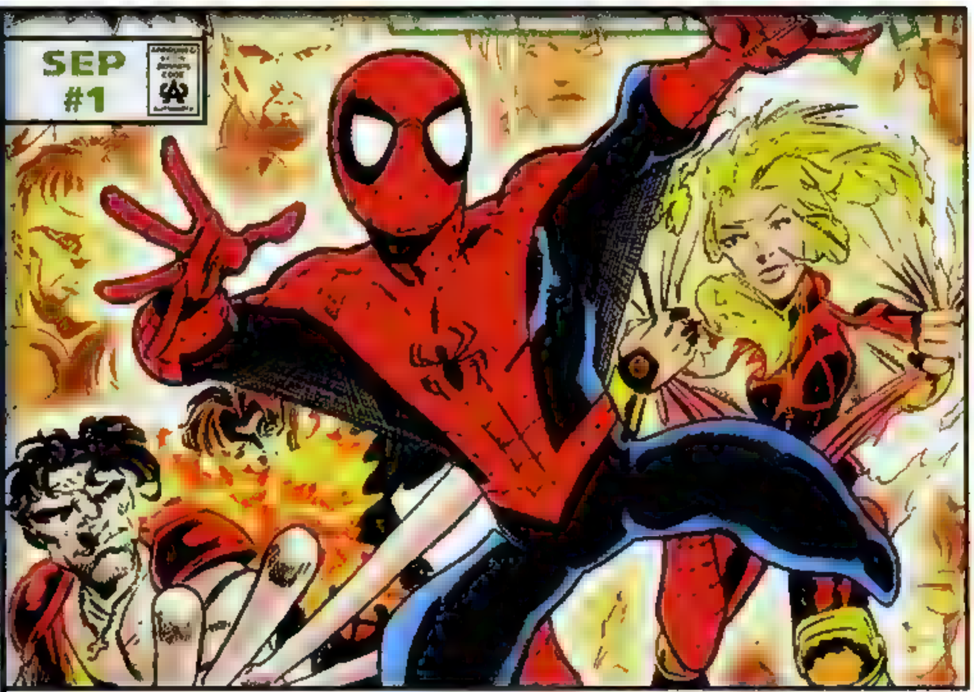
I never really drew Spider-Man professionally before the trading cards. When I first started getting work at Marvel someone had asked me, "What are the characters that you'd love to take a shot at...?" Spider-Man was always lower on the list. I liked him when I was younger, and I did follow the books, but he was never a character that I saw myself drawing. When I first got the chance to draw Spider-Man, especially the type of book we were doing with UNTOLD TALES, I obviously looked at some of the Steve Ditko stuff as part of my research. But the guy whose art I referenced the most to get myself into the mindset of Spider-Man was Rick Leonardi. I thought he was doing one of the best Spideys around. It had a nice organic feel to it. He was definitely an influence.

Was it Rick's 2099 issues or his earlier Spider-Man that you researched?

Even though he did do some other Spider-Man work, it was his 2009 art.

Don't you think it's ironic that you went to a Spider-Man in the far future to capture a Spider-Man in his very beginnings?





(laughter) Yeah, I guess so...Rick just had a real nice flow to the character.

Tom Peyer is writing MARVEL TEAM-UP. How is it working with him?

At this point we're still feeling our way with the "penciler-writer relationship." I've had a few pleasant conversations with him and he's always been open to any suggestions I had. He has an idea for the first six issues or so of pretty much what he wants to do to launch the title.

Al Williamson is inking the book and I'm really happy about that! He made the transition with me from UNTOLD TALES. I've admired his work for years. Al's a great guy.

Who would you like to see appear in the new TEAM-UP? Perhaps the return of American Eagle or Woodgod? (If any of you readers remember these characters you are truly Marvel Zombies!)

No, I don't think we'll see those guys anytime soon. Hhmmm...let me think about this...of course I have to say the Fantastic Four and Captain America. But, until these particular characters get retooled back into the familiar Marvel groove, I'll let Tom [Peyer] choose the guest stars. Daredevil is a possibility.

How do you generally handle a penciling job?

When I get a plot I break down the whole thing in small thumbnails. I then Xerox them up to size and lightbox it onto the [art] board in blue pencil. After that, I use a regular graphite pencil and tighten it up.

Same question, but with inking...

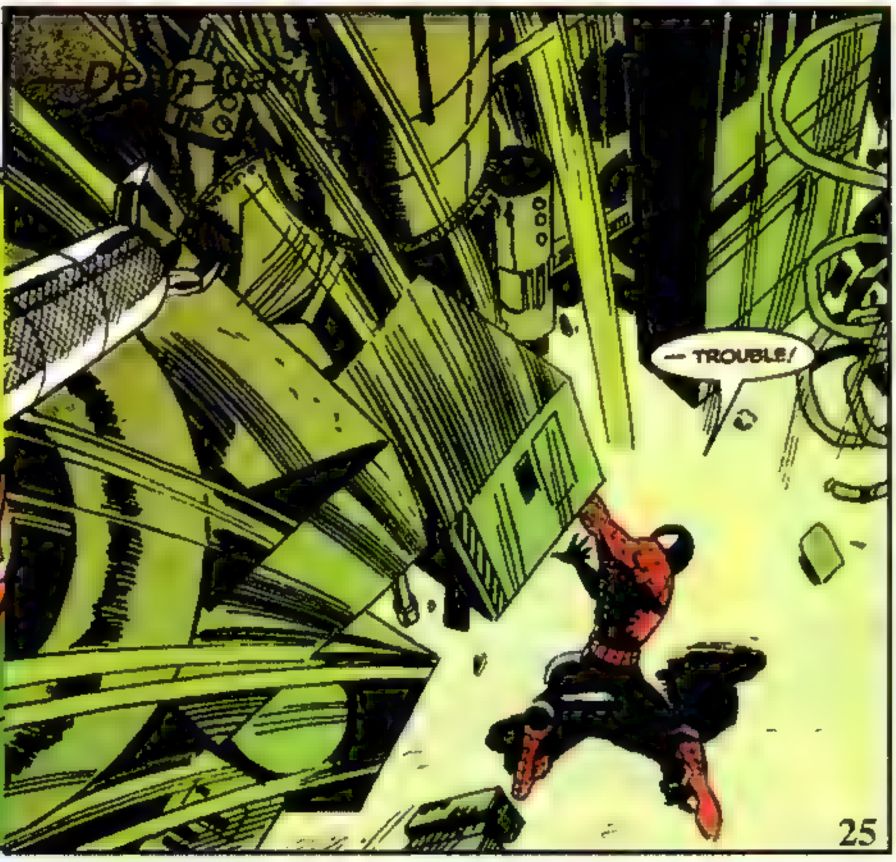
When I ink my own work I tend to lean more on using a pen than a brush. When I'm inking someone else I usually use a combination of pen and brush. It just kind of depends on the penciler. What I did with Ron Frenz (Pat's studio partner) on the HERCULES limited series was primarily pen. Another person I got a chance to ink over was John Buscema on an issue of THOR. This was a couple of years ago and was an absolute thrill. I think it was issue #490. Now for that job I used a lot of brush.

Pat, thanks for your time and good luck on MARVEL TEAM-UP.

Sure...Thanks for giving me a call. I appreciate it.

Hey, listen...I was serious when I suggested an American Eagle or Woodgod appearance in MARVEL TEAM-UP.

(Unfortunately Pat's response was never heard because the phone made a strange clicking sound and then went to a dial tone...What's that all about?)



Action 98. They should. In this game, you're up against
guys who … nothing better than … nd your puny torso into the court. We're talking every
NBA player, every NBA team, all 29 Arenas. Team specific plays. Behind the back passes. Alley
oops. It's all here. Chick Hearn even calls the plays. NBA Action 98. See how you measure up.
NBA action 98
SEGA SATURN
SEGA SATURN
Windows 95 CD-ROM
PLAYER BUILDER
nba® action 98
SEGA®
hard stuff
www.sega.com

Derec Aucoin

Welcome to the Marvel Universe that would have been if today's hottest creators had been around at the birth of Marvel Comics. Think of this as the world that might have been. Think of it as the world that might still be coming.

Derec Aucoin, whose crisp art has graced everything from L.E.G.I.O.N to R.E.B.E.L.S. to VENOM to BUG and now upcoming issues of QUICKSILVER, brings his meticulous artistic charm to Earth's dreaded alien impersonators—the Dire Wraiths.

Many are fearful to recall the time before the Spaceknights came to Earth to banish these lookalike shapeshifters to the realm of Limbo. Rom, perhaps the greatest of these Spaceknights, spearheaded a revolution and enlisted Earth's mightiest heroes to do battle and thus exiled all the Dire Wraiths on Earth into that dream realm.

But in the world of Time Slip, the world where Derec Aucoin designs the Dire Wraiths, the Wraiths are not so easily detected.

Nor is the war won.

Originally, the Spaceknights could locate the imposter Dire Wraith with the aid of their Energy Analyzers, a device which revealed the true nature of its target. But because these Wraiths don't impersonate, but instead burrow themselves deep into the backs of the heads of their victims, this analyzer is unable to detect the hosts as anything other than human.

The Dire Wraiths control their victims, not impersonate them. These weightless bug-like creatures are almost invisible to the human eye, even though they usually grow along the length of the human spine. The Spaceknights are more like executioners than banishers and saviors. Their role is more that of necessity than heroics. For the human host cannot be separated from the Wraiths' hold.

Human hair covers the scars left by the process of possession so all of humanity, save those who've lost their hair, are suspect. Perhaps this explains why so many Wraith/Humans live in fear of the eventuality of age—it reveals their nature to the world. And while the Spaceknights are able to find allies in the likes of Professor Xavier, the Gladiator and Moondragon, all others are suspect.

Where once the Spaceknights swore they never took the life of a human being, now it is quite the opposite. For every Dire Wraith they destroy takes the life of the Wraith's host. But each death is also a nail in the coffins of the Spaceknights and their crusade.

There are heroes on Earth. Heroes who will oppose these so-called Spaceknights.

Heroes who cannot see beyond the stark horror of seemingly innocent death and human agony.

Heroes who cannot see the coiled Wraith behind their heads, ready to spring.

Heroes who won't be heroes for much longer.

STARRING

MATT IDELSON

BY LYSA HAWKINS

He's got a hip haircut and a voice that sounds like wood being split. His razor-like sense of irony is so sharp, it's hard to tell when the owner of that voice is being serious, until his head tilts forward and his eyebrows rise. Matt Idelson first appeared within the hallowed halls of Marvel in the early nineties, as a college intern. He was shifted from office to office working for various editors until finally landing a staff position as an Editorial Assistant for then Editor in Chief, Tom DeFalco. Matt also worked as an Assistant Editor for Ralph Macchio before becoming an Associate Editor in charge of titles like KA-ZAR, DEADPOOL and EXCALIBUR. Hard-working Matt has just recently been promoted to a full Editor position. Just what does this groovy guy from Beantown have to say for himself anyway?

(LH) You're originally from the Boston area. How do you explain the lack of Marvel heroes who call Boston home?
(MI) Just the fact that so many of them are in New York, it makes more sense. It became the central location for super heroes; until DC broke it up, it was where everybody was. The characters that you isolate away from New York tend to not do well; they're just not running into anybody interesting. Remember the X-Men in Australia? Who are they going to meet there? We got Deadpool in San Francisco, but thank God he's got a teleporter because that becomes secondary: where he lives and where he does his business.

(LH) What was your first impression of coming to New York and of Marvel Comics?
(MI) My uncle sat in a McDonalds and John Romita Sr. was in the other booth. They got their jackets mixed up, and my uncle is like ten feet tall and John's not. So they switched coats and they, ha ha, had a laugh, called each other up, and we got a tour here. I was really little. It was before we saw Beatlemania (that gives you a time reference, like '78). It was the old Marvel, on Madison. I don't know, it just looked like a dump, but I could relate to that. I was just a slobby kid.

(LH) Is it important for an editor to be a creator as well as a writer or an artist?
(MI) Absolutely. I can't draw, but I can tell a good drawing from a bad drawing, and sometimes I'm even able to articulate what's wrong with it. You have to give artists and writers guidance, whether they're the best in the business or they're just beginning. Just like I need somebody over me so I don't start to slip up also.

(LH) What about a writer? Does an editor need to write?
(MI) Again, I think I'm a pretty good idea person but I don't think I'd go freelance and write. I think I'd be terrible. As long as you have some creative impulse you can master being good at editing, both the writing and the art.

(LH) How does an editor match artists with the writers? How do you find your creative teams?
(MI) I usually start with a writer, whether it's a new concept or someone coming on a book, and go— just name an artist as a reference point, who you'd like to see doing the book even though you'd never get them. That gives you a visual feel. Working on a project with James Felder, he threw out a feel of what he was looking for, and it was very easy to see Pete Woods, for example, would fit this slot perfectly.

(LH) What was your first exposure to Marvel?
(MI) Through the newspaper comics. Spider-Man strips.

(LH) Who would win the fight, Deadpool or Ka-Zar?
(MI) Deadpool...he's got a gun!

(LH) How can people tell when you're being serious?
(MI) I don't know....

LET'S RULE THE WORLD

Any do-gooder worth his biceps can save the planet but only a select few can rule it! As a matter of fact, no villain has ever conquered the world, although many have tried. So here's your chance to prove that you can outsmart, outplay, and outmaneuver some of the greatest heroes in the Marvel Universe and accomplish the one thing no villain ever has [insert dramatic musical crescendo here] . . . **RULE THE WORLD!**

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:

Choose which dastardly dude you want to play from the following: Kraven the Hunter, Dr. Doom, or Juggernaut. Naturally, each has an arch nemesis that stands between him and world domination. In order to defeat your nemesis and [insert dramatic musical crescendo here] . . . **RULE THE WORLD**, you've got to make your way through the board game on the following pages and gather Villainy Points by answering the trivia questions in each of its squares. Every time you answer a question correctly, add the number of Villainy Points given in the parentheses to your total. The object of the game is to face your arch nemesis with enough points to defeat them and thus [insert dramatic musical crescendo here] . . . **RULE THE WORLD!**

So, without further ado, pick one of the three starting points on the left and get going. Move your player into the first square and answer the question there as best you can. (Write your answers down on a separate piece of paper for 3 reasons: 1) So you won't forget because you can't check 'em until the end of the game; 2) this way your friends can play too; and 3) you don't want to ruin the mint condition of this milestone in Marvel History, do you?). Then move to the next square. Repeat. Go in any direction you wish, just don't ever cross your own path. A straight path may not get you enough points to win so take the long way. Once you've completed whatever pattern you may have chosen on the board and find yourself face-to-face with your arch nemesis, check your answers located where Julio says (on the Ship Shape/Next Issue page) and total up your points. If you've earned enough Villainy Points to defeat your arch nemesis, congratulations, you . . . [insert dramatic musical crescendo here] **RULE THE WORLD!**

If not, don't feel too bad, you're not the first villain to have your plans for world domination thwarted. And hey, there's always next time. Or the time after that. Or the time after that. Or the time after that. Or the time after that

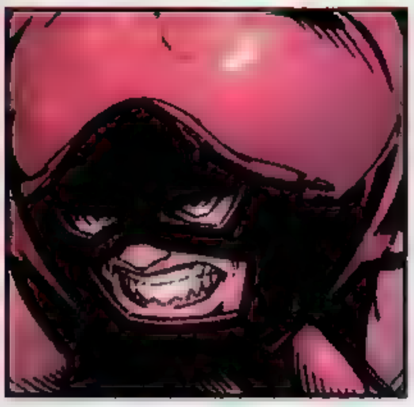
—Robert Piotrowski

DR. DOOM

Victor Von Doom
Megalomaniacal Ruler of Latveria

ARCH NEMESIS
FANTASTIC FOUR

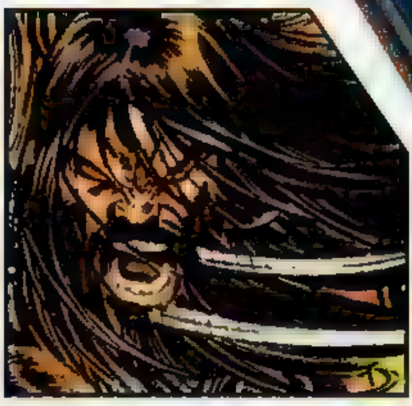
JUGGERNAUT



Cain Marko
Power of the Gem of Cyttorak

ARCH NEMESIS
X-MEN

KRAVEN



Alyosha Kravinov
Master Hunter

ARCH NEMESIS
SPIDER-MAN

LET'S RULE THE WORLD: BATTLEFIELD

Disgruntled by political scandal, Steve Rogers tossed his Captain America duds aside and became a hero with no patriotic ties named ______. (3)

START

The real Moon Knight: Marc ______. (3)

Unscramble these letters to spell the name of one of Marvel's greatest villains: "LERSDUKL" (2)

Unscramble these letters to spell the name of one of Marvel's greatest heroes: "LRVEIDALED" (2)

Arnim ____. (2)

He headed up Operation: Zero Tolerance. (1)

He created Hydra. (4)

FANTASTIC FOUR

END FANTASTIC FOUR: the Marvel Universe's senior team and one heck of a fighting force. 40 Villainy Points will keep them down for the count!

Carl Creel: The ______ Man. (1)

Most coveted positions in the Hellfire Club's Inner Circle. (2)

The Thing's middle initial. (2)

He invented the super neutralizer and rid the world of the Dire Wraiths. (4)

She rules Hel. (2)

What did Otto Octavius do for a living before he became the devious Doc Ock? (2)
a) Atomic Researcher
b) Biophysicist
c) Botanist
d) Beekeeper

TALES OF SUSPENSE featured which two Marvel characters? (3)
a) Artie & Leech
b) Cap & Iron Man
c) Spidey & Thor
d) Dr. Strange & Dracula

What villain once appeared in a Paul McCartney song? (3)
a) Wrecker
b) Masque
c) Crimson Dynamo
d) Stilt Man

Who did the Avengers trick into thwarting the first invasion of the Lava Men? (3)
a) Hulk
b) Sub-Mariner
c) Magneto
d) Dazzler

True or False: The multi-talented Mimic spent a short time as leader of the X-Men. (1)

X-MEN

END X-MEN: the toughest mutants on the planet with plenty of butt-kicking experience. 45 Villainy Points and they're putty in your hands!

START

Who was the first villain to learn how to dampen Peter Parker's spider-sense? (5)

As Cable was to X-Force she was to the Hellions. (2)

Who created the New Men and the Knights of Wundagore? (3)

What classic villain did the FF face in FANTASTIC FOUR #5? (3)

In what State is the Vault located? (4)

Air Walker, Destroyer, and Firelord all worked for him. (2)

Also known as William Baker. (4)

What was Sue Storm's pre-FF career? (3)

His obsession with Gwen Stacy helped trigger a villainous persona which eventually had Spidey seeing double. (2)

Magneto's grand-daughter. (2)

SPIDER-MAN

END SPIDER-MAN: a one-man dynamo. 35 Villainy Points will squash him flat!

Kevin Plunder's fuzzy buddy. (2)

MARVEL SILLY MOMENTS presents

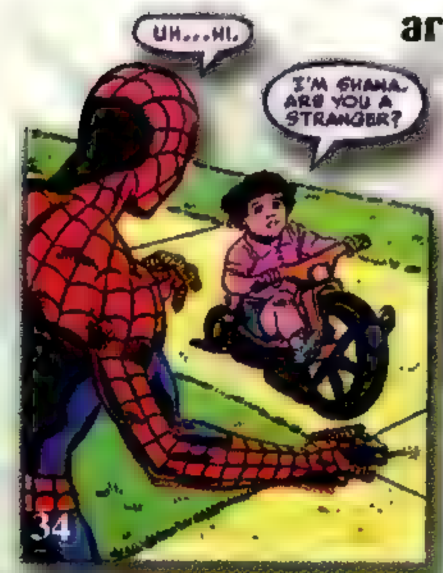
STRANDED IN THE SUBURBS!

Spider-Man's powers work just fine when he's in the big city. But take him out of Manhattan, into a different setting, and there can be... complications! That's what happened when the Wall-Crawler found himself stranded in the suburbs in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #267, the second story ever written by fan-favorite writer Peter David!

The issue, which was entitled "The Commuter Cometh!", dealt with a small-town crook who takes the train into the big city every day to commit his crimes. The story began with Spidey stumbling upon the Commuter in the act of robbing a safe. Spidey pursued the Commuter, but arrived too late to prevent his prey from boarding a train to Scarsdale! Fortunately, Spidey managed to tag his foe with a Spidey tracer before he made a clean getaway.

Once Spidey trailed his foe out to the suburbs, that's when Web-Head's troubles really began! The first thing he encountered was an angry doberman, forcing Spidey to web up the dog's mouth!

But our hero had bigger problems to worry about! You see, there are no tall buildings for ol' Spidey to swing from out in suburbia!



Spidey shot a web high into the sky, only to find it hitting empty air! Sensing Spidey's need for transportation, a little girl offered, "Wanna borrow my Big Wheel?" (The little girl was actually Peter David's real-life daughter, Shana!) Spidey tried to climb up a tree, but

the tree broke under his weight and he fell to the ground! As if this wasn't embarrassing enough, Shana asked Spidey, "Where did you get your Under-roos?"

A couple named Irving and Frieda, representing the local neighborhood watch, tried to place Spidey under citizen's arrest. Spidey protested as Irving ordered him to put his hands up and allow himself to be frisked for concealed weapons. But Frieda got a little too frisky with her frisking, and a steamed Spidey webbed the annoying couple to the hood of a parked car!

Spidey tried hitching a ride aboard a bus, but the bus driver stopped the vehicle and ordered Spidey to pay the fare. Not having any spare change in his costume, Spidey was booted from the bus. As fate would have it, a garbage truck drove by and offered Spidey a ride. Swallowing his pride, Spidey accepted the lift from the sanitation department!

Spidey finally caught up with his quarry, just as the Commuter hopped into his Volvo and drove off. In the story's one unbelievable twist, a taxi happened to be driving by at that exact moment, and Spidey hitched a ride, commenting, "I don't believe it. Something going MY way for once!" (How Spidey expected to pay for this cab ride was never explained, nor was the presence of a taxicab on a suburban street. Mr. David may have been stretching credibility a bit at this point!)

The exasperated safecracker couldn't understand why Spider-Man was so determined to catch him. The Commuting Crook commented, "WHY won't he give up? I've never robbed HIM!" Finally Spidey caught the Commuter and recovered the stolen money.

When it was all over, little Shana asked Spidey, "Mister, are you living here from now on?" Spidey responded, "Sorry, kid. I'm heading back to the city for some peace and quiet. Suburbia is just a little too wild for your friendly neighborhood Spider-Man!"

–Barry Dutter

QUICKSILVER

BEAST FILES

Wise wretch! With pleasures too refin'd to please;
With too much spirit to be e'er at ease;
With too much quickness ever to be taught;
With too much thinking to have a common thought.
You purchase pain with all that joy can give,
And die of nothing but a rage to live.
—Alexander Pope

Young, arrogant Pietro Maximoff is the world's fastest mutant. He is more commonly known, and quite accurately at that, as Quicksilver. With his ability to move faster than the eye can see, the world can seem a pretty slow place. This coupled with the factors surrounding the young man's very existence seem to create a virtual cascade of confusion and anger in his life.

Quicksilver and his twin sister Wanda [See File: Scarlet Witch] are both the offspring of Erik Magnus Lenscherr [See File: Magneto] and Magda Lenscherr. Magda fled from Erik after the death of their first-born daughter, after witnessing him use his powers for the first time in vengeance to slaughter the people who caused the child's death. Horrified at the brutality she witnessed, she felt that the man she fell in love with was no more. Further to her shock was the revelation that she was pregnant. Traveling alone through harsh weather and rough terrain, she made her way up the mountainous region of Wundagore. It was in the home of the High Evolutionary [See File: High Evolutionary] that Wanda and Pietro were born with the aid of the cow-woman Bova acting as midwife.

Shortly after the birth of the twins, Magda decided that life for them would be better off without her. Fearing for their lives if Erik should ever discover their existence, she made her way out into the harsh mountain winter, to die alone. Failing to place the children with his first choice for parentage, the retired super hero, the Whizzer [See File: The Whizzer], the High Evolutionary eventually delivered the infants into the care of the Maximoffs, a pair of Gypsies who traveled the mountainous region surrounding Wundagore.

Early in their adolescence Pietro and Wanda learned of their mutant powers and soon after were forced to leave the Gypsies they had grown up with to make their way on their own. They were among the first mutants Professor Charles Xavier [See File: Professor X] approached about recruitment into what would prove to be the X-Men. They politely refused his offer and, had they not run afoul of a mob of angry villagers who witnessed the display of Wanda's powers, they may have never had anything to do with other mutants. At that moment, Magneto entered the picture, saving them from the mob and offering them a chance to join another mutant band. This time, they did not refuse and became founding members of the Brotherhood of Evil Mutants.

Quicksilver and his sister both soon tired of playing the role of villain. In a move as swift as his feet, the duo made headlines as the first mutant members to join the world-renowned Avengers. Only a couple of times since his joining has he strayed from the straight and narrow. Countless times he has proven himself as both an Avenger and later as a member of X-Factor.

Recently, with the events of Onslaught [See File: Onslaught], he along with the Black Widow were the only surviving members of the Avengers. Joining ranks with the X-Men for a short duration to keep an eye on the man known as Joseph [Note: A de-aged, amnesiac Magneto], he has since struck out on his own to find his own direction in life. What that choice will be, given the recent happenings in his life, remains to be seen.

NOTES:

Quicksilver's powers are all derived from beneficial mutations based around the concept of speed. His legs are superhumanly strong and quite capable of leg-pressing approximately 10 tons in weight. When using this strength in forward locomotion, he has been observed to move at speeds up to Mach 3. Presently, however, there is no known top speed, as it has never successfully been gauged. He has, however, been seen defying gravity by running straight up the sides of buildings and using the surface tension of water to run across its surface.

Further, his body has increased durability, metabolism, reflexes, and endurance which allow him to move at supersonic speeds for large time spans. The amount of his physical durability is unknown, but seemingly must be immense to withstand the air resistance and friction caused by moving at such high velocities. His metabolism and endurance are on a superhuman scale, allowing him to be immune to most fatigue poisons as well as heal himself far faster than normal if injured. His reflexes as well seem to stem from a difference in perceptions. The motor functions of his brain seem to work at an accelerated rate that is proportional to the speed of his body. Thus, to him the entire world is moving in slow motion, and he is the only one moving at proper speed.

"She's Savage and Sensational!"

ORIGIN OF THE SPECIES

SHE-HULK

By Pat Jankiewicz

There have been many incredible feats in the annals of medicine. However, none were more impressive than one amazing accomplishment that occurred in Los Angeles in 1980: attorney Jennifer Walters was saved by an emergency blood transfusion through a garden hose!

This medical miracle was impressive enough, but since this is Marvel Comics and her cousin was Bruce Banner, better known as The Incredible Hulk, we all knew what would come next: Walters transformed into a jade giantess, called herself "She-Hulk," and her own comic book career was launched with THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK.

The cover was a take-off on Jack Kirby's cover of INCREDIBLE HULK #1, showing Jennifer Walters standing(In oh-so-'70s ascot and bell-bottom pants) with the She-Hulk looming over her. It said "Stan Lee Proudly Presents: The She-Hulk Lives!" Not very grammatical, but one thing was immediately clear: She-Hulk was much different than the mousy Miss Walters!

In fact, the statuesque She-Hulk is a lot easier on the eyes than her cousin Hulk and other Gamma-Ray casualties like The Abomination and The Leader.

Because she received her powers through the transfusion, she took in a much smaller dosage of radiation. This allowed her to retain her mind after "hulking out," whereas Banner had no say over what the Hulk did. However, she did talk like the green Hulk in the first few issues of her book.

She sprang from the brow of Stan (The Man) Lee, who scripted the first issue of SAVAGE SHE-HULK. Stan gets positively teary-eyed when recounting her origin. "Well, HULK was doing well and we're greedy," he jokes. She-Hulk owes her creation partly to the success of the Bill Bixby/Lou Ferrigno "Incredible Hulk" TV series. Its popularity made others want to rip it off.

She was actually created for copyright purposes. Marvel had to establish a female Hulk to protect themselves before someone else did. (Spider-Woman was created for the same reason, a cartoon company called Filmation was preparing a Spider-Woman cartoon so when Marvel unveiled theirs, Filmation had to change her name to "Web Woman.")

There were two different portrayals of She–Hulk in the comic. When Stan Lee launched the series, She–Hulk was a feral, angry beast. In the mid–1980s, artist John Byrne, taking a cue from Roger Stern's She-Hulk appearances in AVENGERS, reshaped her into a witty heroine.

Over the years, She-Hulk has become one of Marvel's most influential female characters, inspiring hordes of imitators. Don't believe me? Check out DC's Rampage or worse, much worse, Image's She-Dragon, the most offensive clone since Ben Reilly!

What makes She-Hulk so unique is that she loves being She-Hulk; she loves being tall and green and standing out in a crowd. Her origin is simplicity itself: attorney Jennifer Walters is gunned down by mobster Nicholas Trask and her visiting cousin Bruce Banner saves her with the aforementioned garden hose. Jennifer ("Jen" to friends and family) survives, but the Gamma particles in Bruce's blood turn her into a 6'7" She-Hulk.

While Hulk made do in ripped purple pants, fans looking for a topless She-Hulk had to settle for her in a ripped but all-concealing dress...After all, this wasn't a black and white comic!

She-Hulk was one of Marvel's first "out of state" heroines, living in sunny Southern California instead of the Big Apple. Unfortunately. SAVAGE SHE-HULK started a downhill slide with issue #2, which Stan didn't write!

The book essentially became HULK-lite; a lazy retread of stories from INCREDIBLE HULK. She-Hulk's dad, Sheriff Morris Walters, was hunting her without knowing the monster was his daughter, a clumsy, not-so-subtle reprise of General Ross's hunting Hulk. She-Hulk would smash such obstacles as a city bus and a forklift, not quite as exciting as her cousin's battles with jets and tanks. While having her directly related to The Hulk seemed fertile ground for storytelling, she and Bruce didn't meet again for years after his initial first issue appearance.

The stories were conventional, the situations were generic, and She-Hulk's strength could overcome anything but indifferent handling. Her villains were ridiculous; anyone remember The Dwellers in Darkness? What about Ultima? How about The Man-Elephant? (Oh, who could forget him? He was introduced in that legendary story "MAKE WAY FOR THE MAN-ELEPHANT!")

Ironically, She-Hulk's most persistent foe came not in the comics but on the letters page. Barry Dutter started a one-fan campaign to stamp out the She-Hulk, seeing her as an aberration in the Marvel universe. He besieged SAVAGE SHE-HULK with hate mail and resumed his campaign in any book she subsequently resurfaced in, including THE AVENGERS and FANTASTIC FOUR.

His attacks became so vitriolic, John Byrne did a special FF issue addressing it (FF #284) in it, She-Hulk is enslaved and brutalized by a drooling Cro-Magnon brute in the microverse. His name is "Dutta" and the high point of the story has She-Hulk belting him in the jaw with the battle cry "Dutta—shut up!" (Since then, Barry has used his pow-

ers for good, not evil, writing for our own MARVEL VISION.)

SAVAGE SHE-HULK was deservedly canceled and She-Hulk became one of the most maligned characters in the Marvel Universe. She looked like a second-stringer, consigned to an occasional MARVEL TEAM-UP or TWO-IN-ONE. Nothing could boost her popularity or gain her audience sympathy, not even joining The Avengers. When she was beaten to a bloody pulp by Dr. Octopus, Titania, Absorbing Man, the Wrecking Crew, and others in SECRET WARS, nobody even cared!

Just as Jennifer seemed destined to go the way of Ms. Marvel, Spider-Woman, Dazzler, Hellcat, Millie The Model and Night Nurse, she met a guy who changed her life. That man was writer/artist extrordinaire John Byrne, who played Henry Higgins to She-Hulk's Eliza Doolittle. He dusted her off and revitalized her, turning her into an "A-List" character again.

He added white gloves to make her more ladylike, gave her a personality and made her fun. She was running around in FLASHDANCE-type fitness clothes and headband (Very painfully '80s!) when Byrne gave her a jumpsuit that remains her 'outfit' to this day (Most of the time she wears business suits, befitting her work as a lawyer).

Her life changed when she joined "The World's Greatest Comic Magazine"! In FANTASTIC FOUR #265, Byrne took the unusual step of having her replace Ben Grimm in the FF! Usually, when a member of the FF was replaced by an "outsider," be it Medusa, Luke Cage or Thundra, readers were upset, but nobody (except Barry Dutter) objected to She-Hulk, despite The Thing being the FF's most popular member. Having the FF become 50% female made the book sexy and unpredictable.

She was with them on various adventures, including a battle with the new Hate-Monger, Black Bolt's wedding, the resurrection of Jean Grey and the destruction of the Baxter Building. She-Hulk helped thwart the Masque of Doom and the giant monster Terminus. She was present when the Richards lost their second child and also helped recover Reed's long-lost Dad.

"Shulkie," as the Torch dubbed her, even went back in time with them to the 1930s where she re-created Superman's famous car-carrying pose from ACTION COMICS #1. She was a bridesmaid at Johnny's wedding and even wound up as a centerfold in a dirty magazine when a sleazy magazine photographed her sunbathing topless on the roof of the Baxter Building.

Sadly, The Thing returned and She-Hulk was back on the street. Happily, when John Byrne left the FF, he joined her and together they launched THE SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK. The cover had an angry She-Hulk holding a copy of SAVAGE SHE-HULK #1, promising that "This is your second chance. If you don't buy my book this time, I'm gonna come to your house and rip up all your X-MEN!" The book was amazing; She-Hulk broke the third wall and talked directly to readers, commented on the scripts she was given, and answered her own letters on the letter page. Byrne and She-Hulk had a relationship that recalled the Narrator and Rocky the Flying Squirrel on the old BULLWINKLE show. Peter David poked fun at this when She-Hulk guested in HULK. She tried to break the third wall while Hulk wondered who she was speaking to.

Jennifer had received another dose of Gamma radiation in her own Graphic Novel and is now permanently the She-Hulk. Byrne then used her background as a lawyer, which the original series rarely did, and gave her a job as a prosecutor for the D.A.'s office.

We met new supporting characters, like her housekeeper Garth and She-Hulk's best friend Louise Weezi Mason, who worked as her legal secretary and executive assistant. Weezi was also the 1940s Timely Comics superheroine, Blonde Phantom. (Weezi also tearfully explains "Marvel Time": if you have a book, you don't age, but if your book is canceled, you grow old.) She began dating Morris.

SENSATIONAL SHE-HULK kept the "lame villain" motif from THE SAVAGE SHE-HULK (although it wasn't intentional in SAVAGE!), pitting her against such Marvel has-beens as The Headmen (whose leader is a gorilla with a human head!) [See last issue's Chronicles for more. — Tim], The Ringmaster and his Circus of Crime, Spragg the Living Hill, Mysterio and his henchmen dressed up as The Terrible Toad Men, and Xemnu, but sadly, no Spider-Slayers!

In one of Byrne's most audacious and impressive moves, he even made himself a character. While comics creators have appeared in books before, Stan and Jack in FF, Steve Gerber in MAN-THING, Roy Thomas in AVENGERS and FF, and Gerry Conway in THOR, none had ever done it the way Byrne did.

He was seen in the comic regularly and once on the cover. She-Hulk and Byrne had a playful rivalry: when she found D.A. Tower attractive, a spiteful Byrne immediately established Tower as married with two daughters. If a villain was far beneath her, she would yell at Byrne. When the Terrible Toad Men imposters arrived, she snapped "TOAD MEN, Byrne?? You stuck me with the Toad Men??" The Byrne/She-Hulk relationship was so intense that when he left the book in SHE-HULK #50, she goes to the Marvel Comics offices and accidentally throws him to his death.

The book was a treasure trove of Marvel and comics' trivia, from the obligatory guest appearance (Spider-Man appears on one SHE-HULK cover, waving and saying 'Hi, kids!') to the classic Marvel scenario of the villain-being-a-pawn-of-a-greater-villain. When a bad guy told She-Hulk he never met the villain who hired him to attack her, she responded "I KNOW how these things work! It'll be at least my third issue before I find out who it is." She then turned to face the reader, adding "You readers will probably find out on the next page..." which we did.

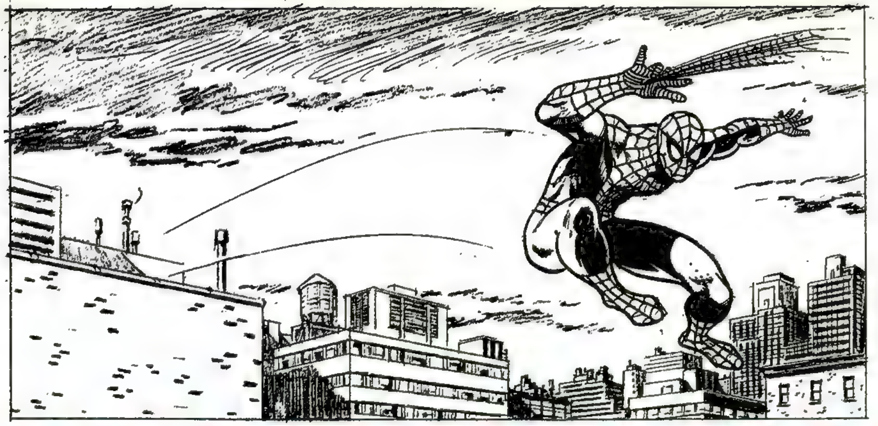
She-Hulk escaped danger by ripping a hole in the page and cutting through the ads, she jumped to different panels and one cover, showing She-Hulk about to be shot in a funhouse, had a warning that "The Surgeon General's office has determined that this scene does not appear in this magazine!" Another cover showed Spidey, Wolverine and Punisher in action, with a blurb promising that all three "were ON this issue," while She-Hulk noted it said nothing about them being in the book.

A running joke in the book was that many of the villains lusted after She-Hulk, much to her disgust. Mole Man tried to marry her, Xemnu attempted to mate with her (even giving her all-encompassing body hair like his own), and Mahkizmo wanted to claim her as his own, among others. She-Hulk herself had a dream in one issue where she was romanced by Marvel's Hercules.

She–Hulk hasn't been as successful as her cousin in show business. She was going to star in a live-action TV pilot that was never finished. It had one of Bill Bixby's last performances as David Banner, but the project fell apart when the producers couldn't find an actress to play Jennifer Walters. The filmmakers had cast model/volleyball player Gabrielle Reece (now the Nike spokesperson) as their She–Hulk.

She–Hulk languished unadapted, until New World tried to launch her again as a feature film; with Brigette (RED SONJA) Nielsen cast as the large, green lawyer; A pre–production photo of Nielsen was released and a starting date announced. This project also collapsed and the photo was not promising, showing Nielsen in green lipstick, wig and jumpsuit, but no green skin! She-Hulk is a regular on THE INCREDIBLE HULK cartoon, well-voiced by Lenore Zane and is being considered for a spin-off series.

Still, despite her book being canceled, no one should despair about Jennifer Walters' absence. After all, she survived SAVAGE SHE-HULK and SECRET WARS, and as everyone from the Toad Men to the Man-Elephant and Barry Dutter should know by now, it's hard to keep a good She-Hulk down!



THE GREATEST COMICS NEVER SEEN

Sometimes there are stories that are created and almost finished that do so much to change the status quo of a particular hero that we must put them away, never to be seen, or heard of, again.

THE MANHATTAN PROJECT is such a story. Originally proposed as a Spider-Man graphic novel written by Jim Shooter and Alan Zelenetz and drawn by Larry Lieber (the current artist of the Spider-Man newspaper strip), this story so changed the direction of what Spider-Man would become that it was canceled shortly after the penciling was completed.

Now, I know what you're thinking... how could the Spider-Man universe change so much in one story?

Well, this is the House Of Ideas. In this story...

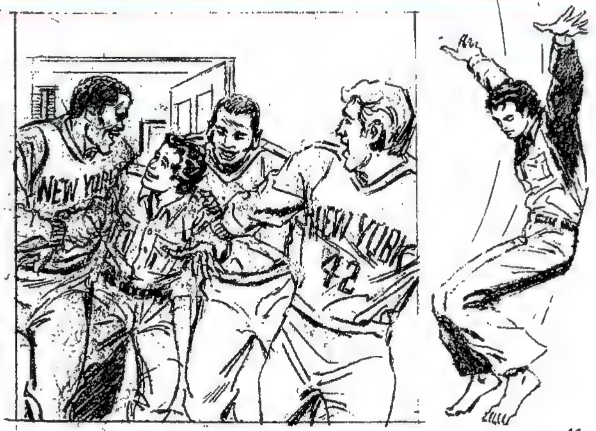
- Spider-Man gets shot
- Peter Parker gets engaged to a girl we've never seen before
- Peter Parker signs with the New York Knicks to play pro-ball
- Aunt May and Peter's fiancée get kidnapped
- Spider-Man's identity is revealed to the Kingpin and Bullseye
- Vanessa leaves her husband, the Kingpin
- Spider-Man watches his Aunt May and his fiancée gunned down before his eyes
- The Kingpin kills Bullseye
- The Kingpin is killed in a fight with Spider-Man

Obviously, this is one story that, if published, would have changed the life of Spider-Man forever. It did have a happy ending, though. Spider-Man, moments before his climactic battle with the Kingpin, discovers his aunt and fiancée are very much alive. And, at the end, Peter and Lynn begin planning their wedding.

And while this story was perhaps too extreme for Spider-Man, it's nice to think that there was a chance that Peter could marry someone who was filthy, stinking rich.

Of course, this story was and always will be part of the annals of the...

GREATEST COMICS NEVER SEEN.



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• 45 lethal missions.
• Huge 3-D worlds.
• Customizable weapons and armor.
• One- or two-player combat.
• It's enough to excite any would-be assassin.
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BIG BREAKS

Welcome to a series of interviews featuring the stories behind the storytellers. The idea is to not only give you, the fan, a sense of how your favorite creators got into the biz, but also to give you an idea of what it takes to work at Mighty Marvel.

FEATURING MIKE WIERINGO

This month, we're asking that penciling wizard Mike Wieringo to tell us how he first got behind a drawing table.

MARVEL VISION: First of all, let's talk about your last credits. What were they?

MIKE WIERINGO: Doc Savage, Justice League Quarterly, Flash, X-FORCE, ROGUE, and of course, SENSATIONAL SPIDER-MAN.

MV: How did you break into comics?

MW: Well, my first work was a 3-issue limited series for Millennium. It was a Doc Savage miniseries. Brian Stelfreeze and Karl Story set that job up for me. But then, things got pretty sparse.

MV: What did you do?

MW: Well, I pretty much gave up on ever getting into comics. I had been working at a grocery store and then at Wal-Mart out here, living with my parents, hoping to get a call. And it wasn't coming. I spent the summer of 1991 working on my samples, living off some money that my parents gave me. I figured that when that money was gone, well, I'd go and get a real job.

MV: Geez.

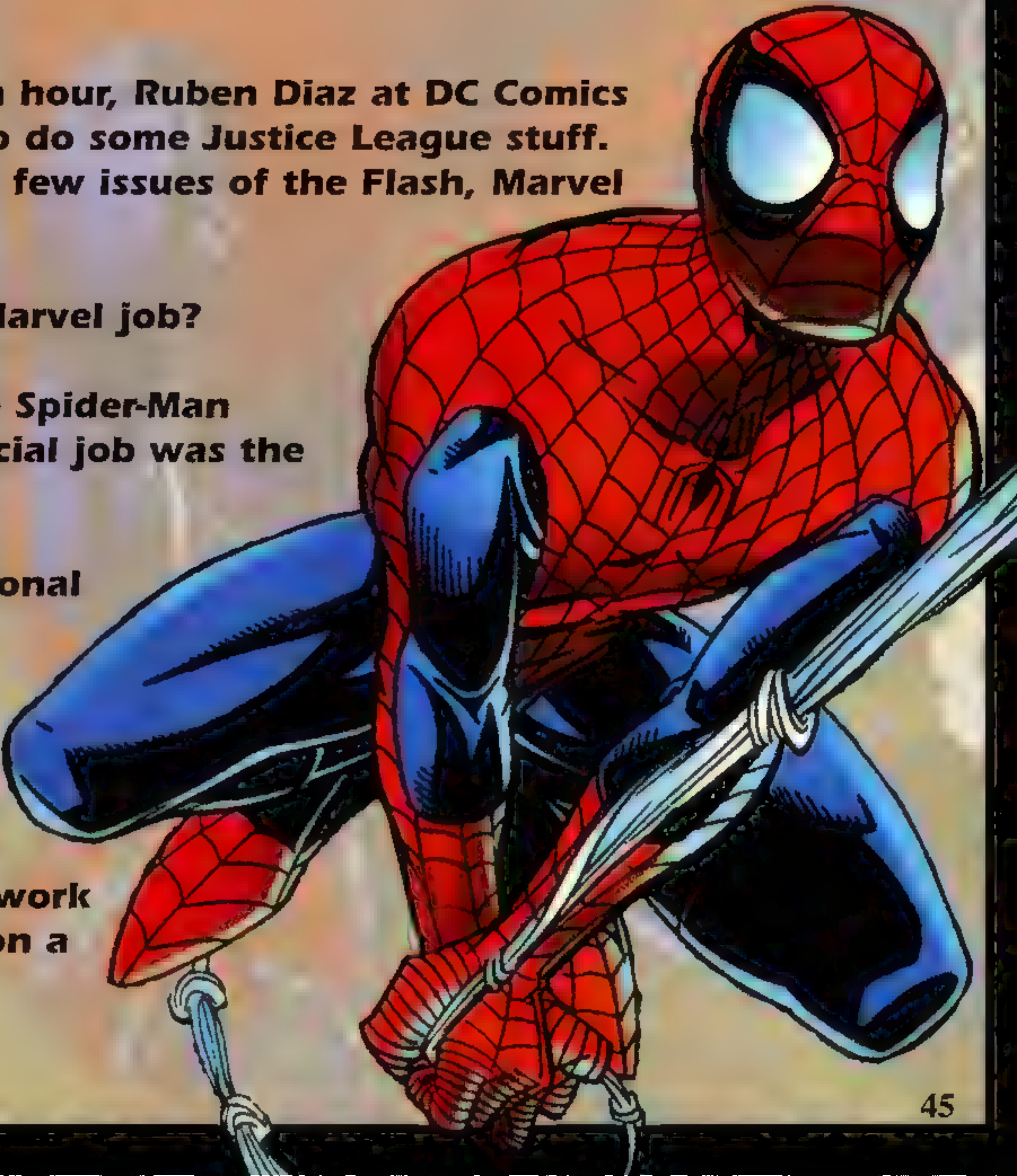
MW: But then, at the 11th hour, Ruben Diaz at DC Comics called me and asked me to do some Justice League stuff. And then, after I'd done a few issues of the Flash, Marvel called.

MV: What was your first Marvel job?

MW: It was a piece for the Spider-Man Calendar. But my first official job was the Rogue limited series.

MV: And later, the Sensational Spider-Man.

MW: Yeah, there aren't that many people who stay on a book more than 4-5 issues these days, and I've wanted to be able to work up a real substantial run on a book. It's been great.



ANDY MANGELS'S ALL-NEW REEL MARVEL

The INCREDIBLE HULK

Fall 1996: The United Paramount Network debuts its new Sunday lineup of animated series. Among them is one of Marvel's most popular heroes, translated to the animation screen for his second starring role. *The Incredible Hulk* had thirteen episodes in its first season, ending with a multiparter which found Bruce Banner, Rick Jones, and Betty Ross imperiled by not one, but two Hulks!

Fall 1997: UPN began its second Incredible Hulk season on September 21st, though oddly enough, they've only picked up eight new episodes for the second season. When asked why UPN chose so few episodes, making an odd total of twenty-one for the series, producers said, "We don't have a clue." Will Hulk continue into a third season? Time will tell. Meanwhile, She-Hulk has been added to the cast as a regular character, and a few Marvel heroes will be appearing as well. Here's a complete breakdown of the second season of *The Incredible Hulk*.

Sept 21st/ Hulk #14 "Hulk of a Different Color"
The Nutrient Bath experiment has turned the gamma-irradiated Rick Jones into a teen Hulk, and changed Bruce Banner into the Gray Hulk. Thunderbolt Ross tries to kill Hulk, then is rescued by him. Later, Bruce Banner is charged with attempted murder, and She-Hulk arrives in town to defend him. Meanwhile, the Leader and the Gargoyle make a deal with Gray Hulk that will cause the capture of Rick Jones and the suppression of Bruce Banner inside the Gray Hulk. . . forever!

Sept 28th/ Hulk #15 "Down Memory Lane"
Jennifer Walters attends her high school reunion, but she's getting awfully tired these days as She-Hulk. As Banner tries to diagnose her condition, the Leader and Gargoyle attempt to capture Hulk, but Green Hulk defeats them. The Abomination gets involved, Gargoyle declares his love for She-Hulk, and Jennifer Walters finds out that she might become She-Hulk permanently!

Oct 5th/ Hulk #16 "Mind Over Anti-Matter"
Dr. Strange guest-stars when a dark entity crosses over into our dimension, seeking a body strong enough to house its energies. Of course, Hulk is the strongest, so it picks Banner to possess. She-Hulk must enlist the aid of Dr. Strange to go inside Banner's mind where the energy being is destroying the goodness inside Banner. But will they be able to convince both Gray and Green Hulk to help them on the inside of Banner's mind, when in the outside world, Banner has already reverted to the monstrous Dark Hulk?

Oct 26th/ Hulk #17 "They Call Me Mr. Fixit"
The underworld of Chicago is changing, thanks to the arrival of the super-villainess Allure and her enforcer, Crusher Creel. Into the fray comes mob boss She-Hulk and her number one enforcer, a Gray Hulk wearing pinstripe suits and calling himself "Mr. Fixit."

Nov 2nd/ Hulk #18 "Fashion Warriors"
She-Hulk participates in a charity fashion show in a Miami skyscraper, with Bruce cheering her on, when the Leader and Gargoyle attack with their Gamma Warriors. She-Hulk must team up with Betty Ross and a trio of tough models (Hulkie's Angels?) to recapture the skyscraper, *Die Hard* style.

Nov 9th/ Hulk #19 "Hollywood Rocks"
Asteroids are hurtling towards Earth, and Banner is trying to stop them. Unfortunately, Doctor Doom steals his equipment, and Green Hulk must intervene. Meanwhile, She-Hulk becomes a star-in-the-making when she's cast as "Greena, Warrior Princess." But not all is as it seems in Hollywood, and Doctor Doom has some evil plans to get back his kingdom of Latveria.

Nov 16th/ Hulk #20 "The Lost Village"
When Green Hulk rescues an elderly Chinese man from ninjas, he is given a medallion that allows him to immediately change back and forth to Banner. He and She-Hulk travel to Tibet, where they search for the mythical lost valley of Anavrin in the hopes that they'll finally cure Banner of the Hulk. But they are opposed by Scimitar, who wants to take control the mythical village at any cost.

Nov 23rd/ Hulk #21 "Mission: Incredible"
A female known as The Hybrid tries to take over General Ross, causing Gray Hulk and She-Hulk to team up with Agent Gabriel Jones and other members of SHIELD to save an unstable Gamma Power Core at the military installation known as Sea Base. Appearances by Gray Hulk and Green Hulk lead to a resolution of sorts with General Ross and Betty.

HULK FILM NEWS
A few issues ago, we filled you in on the Hulk live-action film, which now seems to be on the fast track to production. They've even opened up a Hulk production office on the Universal lot, but the staffers there are pretty closed-mouthed about the film. Here's what we know so far:

The Hulk (Universal): After years in development with producer Gale Anne Hurd, the Incredible Hulk is set to go to film soon, though without the superlative in front of his name. This film is called, simply, *The Hulk*. Although Joe Johnston (*Jumanji*) was originally set to direct, the reins have reportedly been turned over to writer Jonathan Hensleigh (*The Rock* and *The Saint*), whose script follows earlier drafts by John Turman and Zack Penn. Word these days is that Hensleigh's script is now being tinkered with by other writers, so who knows whether or not he'll stay on as director. As of early October, plans are that filming is set to start the third week of January, with locations in Los Angeles and Arizona. ILM will likely be handling the special effects sequences, and word is that Hulk may be entirely computer-generated!

The story is close to the traditional Hulk origin, with Dr. Bruce Banner becoming the Hulk in an experiment gone awry. Unfortunately, that same experiment creates three other gamma-powered villains, and the Hulk must stop them!

Keep checking back with ***Reel Marvel*** for all the latest news on your favorite gamma-powered greenskin!

Coming Next Month in Marvel Vision:
A preview of Fox's new Silver Surfer animated series, with a preview episode guide, plus cool artwork!

W E ' R E   R E A L L Y   N O T

RIPPING YOU OFF

THE MAKING OF A TRADE PAPERBACK

After working in both Tom Brevoort's and Bobbie Chase's editorial offices as an intern here at Marvel, I discovered the truth behind trade paperbacks. I've worked extensively on the new X-MEN VS. CLANDESTINE tpb and interviewed several editors about the production process involved. I had preconceived ideas and opinions about tpbs, but learned that I was ignorant. So, without any further babble, let us begin your education.

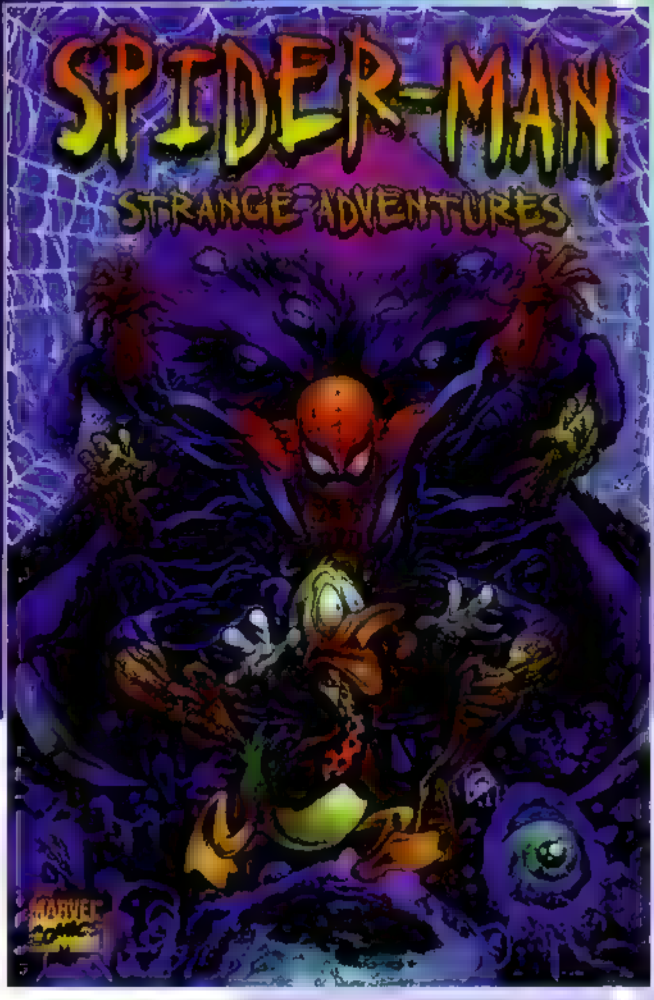
I don't know about all of you, but I always thought that trade paperbacks were made so that a comic book company could make some fast and easy cash. The process, or so I thought, went something like this: a comic series does well and makes money so some executive type calls up manufacturing and says, "Comic 'X' had really good sales, so slap together a new wraparound cover, and send it out by next week." I was wrong. There is a lot more to it. Those things are made for several different reasons and are not so easy to produce. It's a long process.

So, what is the first step to making a tpb? Someone at Marvel has got to think there is good reason to reprint the material in tpb form. There are any number of reasons. For example, editor Tom Brevoort has pitched several stories to reprint in tpb form. He pitched the original Spider-Man "clone saga" for fans who wanted to read the original story. The result: SPIDER-MAN: CLONE GENESIS tpb. He has also pitched the upcoming GOLDEN AGE OF MARVEL tpb and SQUADRON SUPREME tpb. His reasoning is simply that these are great stories that should be easily accessible to fans and professionals alike. "Somebody decides that there is a good reason to reprint the material," Tom said. Marie Javins, editor of the Akira tpbs, added that "events" tend to get reprinted because of their long-lasting impact on many characters and, of course, they tend to sell very well. This explains why nearly every mutant crossover from the MUTANT MASSACRE to the most recent, ONSLAUGHT has been reprinted.

After an idea has been pitched, it must go through the "P and L process," that is, "the profit and loss" process. Basically what happens is the proposal is bounced around and put under intense scrutiny to determine if the proposed project will turn a profit. If it is determined that it will indeed make money, then the final budget for the reprint is figured out. Some books do not get much money and it will show. For example, a book with a good ample budget, based on expected returns, will have an introduction, an afterword, a nice new cover by a well known artist, a new title page and lots of little perks like that.

When it is decided that a story is going to be reprinted into a tpb, a reprint editor is then select-

Marvel intern Jeff "Oscar" Mayer



ed (logical, ain't it?). The editor who pitched the idea in the first place, more than likely, will get the project. If the idea came from someone else, be it Jim Sokolowski, the v.p. of Editorial Planning, or Shirrel Rhodes, Marvel's publisher, or whomever, it is assigned to an editor, usually based on the current work loads of the editors. As Polly Watson, assistant editor of HULK and ELEKTRA, put it, "It's like being told, here, you don't have enough work to do." Polly just finished work on the upcoming CLANDESTINE VS. X-MEN tpb and described in detail what the editors have to do once they are given the assignment.

"The first thing the editor must do," Polly told me, "is make a dummy book." A dummy book is a photocopied book of all the story pages. Having done this myself, I can tell you that this is not a fun procedure. The film, what the printer uses to shoot and give the presses an image to follow in order to produce the final color product, has to be ordered from the warehouse, and if there is no film, as for Golden Age books, then film has to be made. But that is another story. Next, the line-up has to be completed. This means that all the story pages have to be renumbered to show where they will fall in the tpb. This often creates problems when a double-page spread falls, instead of properly on a left, then a right page, on a right page, then a left, essentially chopping the art in half. If the editor moves the pages back one page to fix that spread, then any other double-page spread that was correct before will now have the same problem. Obviously, this is a very annoying task. Once this is completed, the heavy labor begins.

The editor now hires an artist and designer, one to make a new cover and the other to create interior pages like the title page and what have you; the editor also hires a colorist to color the new artwork for the cover. The film of each issue that is being reprinted is shipped to the editor, who then has to label each piece of film with its new page number. Now, here's the problem... each page of a comic comes on four different sheets of black and white film. Each sheet represents a black, yellow, red, or blue plate. These are extremely difficult to tell apart. This is the longest, most boring part of the job, and if it weren't for the interns here at Marvel, it probably would never get done.

The nice thing about a tpb is there is very little new work (compared to a new comic) that needs to be done. A new cover is needed and the book itself needs to be designed. There is a little copy that needs to be written for the back cover and perhaps some interior notes. When there are extra pages (the books are put together in 16-page sections), then someone may be asked to write an introduction. Still, all of these jobs are relatively small and the deadlines are usually lenient.

Once all of the work is in, the book is sent to the printers, who then make the blue book (exactly what it sounds like, a book printed with a smelly blue ink that shows exactly what the final product will look like), and once approved by the editor, the printer shoots final film and prints the book.

Overall, the trade paperbacks may not be the most expensive books to produce (although artists and writers do get a percentage of what they were originally paid for their work), but they are, as Polly Watson put it, "extremely labor intensive." It's editors like Tom Brevoort, ONSLAUGHT's tpb editor Matt Idelson, and many others who see the use in many tpb books and who continue to bring the readers quality productions of their favorite stories in easily accessible volumes that look nice and last a lifetime.

—Peter Schmidt

Crash is back. And he's all pumped-up and ready to rumble.
This time, Crash will have to work his way through huge, all new 3-D environments. He'll fly with a jetpack, surf on a jetboard and saddle up a polar bear cub. He's got new moves, he'll meet new characters and he'll face plenty of dangerous new obstacles. It won't take long to realize: Only the strong survive.
CRASH 2 CORTEX STRIKES BACK
NAUGHTY DOG
UNIVERSAL
UNIVERSAL INTERACTIVE STUDIOS
K-A
PlayStation
PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are trademarks of Sony Computer Entertainment Inc. Crash Bandicoot 2: Cortex Strikes Back™ & ©1997 Universal Interactive Studios, Inc. All rights reserved. Developed by Naughty Dog, Inc. All rights reserved. www.playstation.com

1976 PART 1:
THE RETURN OF THE KING

It had been a shock when Jack Kirby left Marvel in 1970. Next to Stan Lee, Kirby had been the man most responsible for the creation and development of the Marvel Universe in the 1960s. But Kirby had wanted to strike out on his own and had left for DC Comics (then still known as National Periodical Publications) where he could create, draw, plot, script, and edit his own words. So it was perhaps almost as great a surprise to readers when in 1976 Kirby came back to Marvel.

Certainly Kirby had been creatively prolific in his half decade at DC. There he had assembled his legendary and highly influential masterpiece, the great "Fourth World" tetralogy of comics: The New Gods, The Forever People, Mister Miracle, and a thoroughly revamped Jimmy Olsen that tied Superman himself into this new mythos. Kirby likewise launched two other classics, KAMANDI, THE LAST BOY ON EARTH and THE DEMON, as well as doing various other projects ranging from IN THE DAYS OF THE MOB to a run of the war series, THE LOSERS.

Nevertheless, Kirby had grown dissatisfied at DC. For example, he had intended his Fourth World books to be limited series, but DC first would not allow him to bring the storyline to an end, and then cancelled the books for reasons that remain subjects of controversy. And in the mid-seventies, the rise of the independent comic companies was still a half decade away. Basically, there were only two games in town in the comics business.

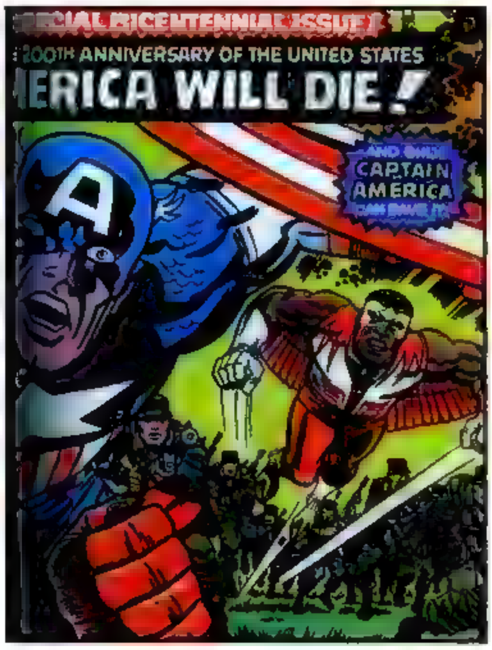
So it was that Kirby returned to Marvel for what would prove to be his last stay there. This time, just as he had at DC, Kirby would not only plot and draw his books, but would script and edit them as well. Actually, this kind of independence, unheard of only a short time before, was no longer unusual in comics. In the 1960s Stan Lee had edited the comics he himself wrote, and edited those written by new writers like Roy Thomas.

Then Thomas became editor in chief and hence became his own editor. A pattern was established by which writers with staff positions would rise to the rank of editor in chief, and then leave staff to devote themselves to writing full time. Being a full-time writer was not only more creatively fulfilling, they found, but also, if they were prolific enough, more profitable. But when an editor in chief stepped down, he continued to edit the books he wrote himself. So it was that Roy Thomas and his successors as editor in chief—Marv Wolfman, Len Wein, and Gerry Conway—became the first of the writer-editors. Kirby, of course, was never editor in chief, but he preferred remaining in Southern California, where he had moved years before, and, in effect, packaging his titles for Marvel out there; hence, he too was made a writer-editor. As you can see, there was also a rapid turnover of editor in chiefs in these years; in 1976 Gerry Conway left the post after a very brief term and Archie Goodwin took over the position. Goodwin would remain in place until Jim Shooter took over in 1978, to remain for nearly a decade thereafter.

It was only appropriate that the returning Jack Kirby take over writing and drawing CAPTAIN AMERICA. Kirby and his former partner Joe Simon had created the character thirty-five years before; Kirby and Stan Lee had revived the Captain in the 1960s. Moreover, it was 1976, the year of the United States' Bicentennial, and, by a wonderful coincidence, the year that Cap's own book reached its two hundredth issue.

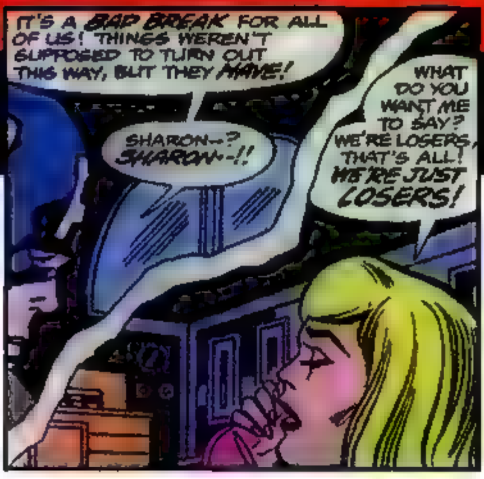
By now Cap's series had been renamed CAPTAIN AMERICA AND THE FALCON, but, although Kirby had not had a hand in creating the Falcon, he kept him on board as Cap's partner and handled the character well. By the end of the year Kirby reintroduced into the regular cast a character he had co-created: Cap's longtime girlfriend, SHIELD agent Sharon Carter, who has recently reappeared in the CAPTAIN AMERICA comics of the 1990s.

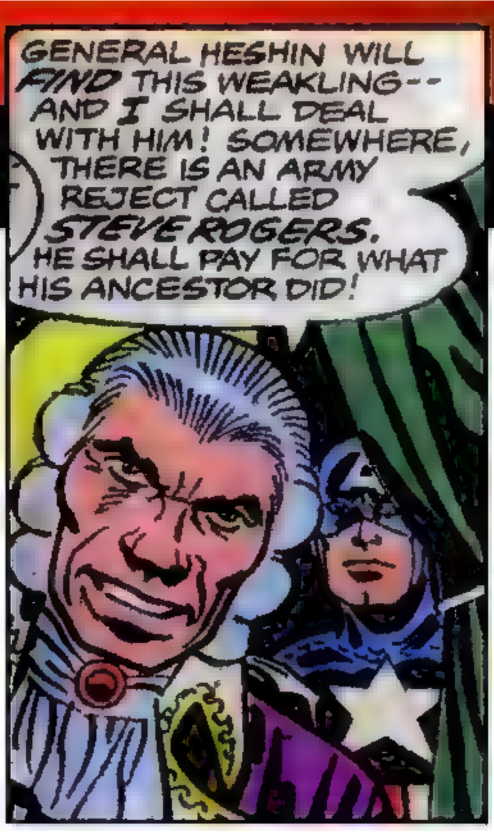
Kirby's work during his 1970s Marvel stint was different from what Marvel readers might have expected. One of the Marvel Revolution's claims to fame was that it had brought a greater sense of reality to the fantasy world of super heroes. A trademark of Kirby's super hero work was the way that he brought his superhuman characters in contact with normal, everyday people. But Kirby also used the comics medium to exaggerate reality and to come up with larger than life,

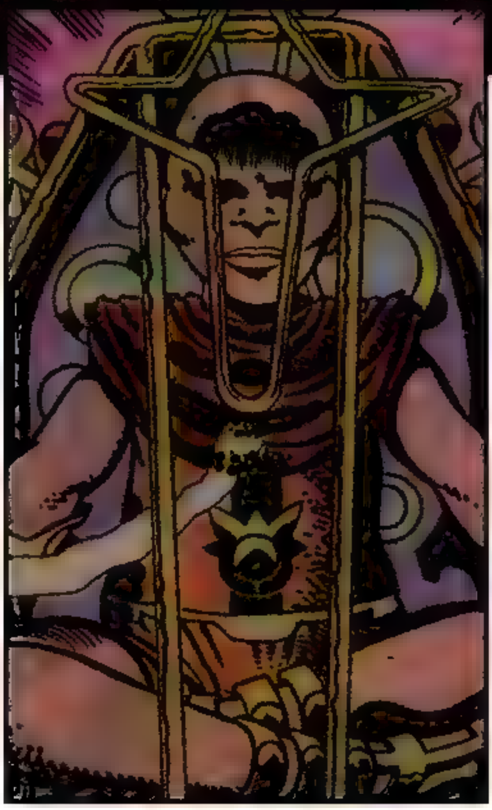


highly stylized characters. Remember, only several years before he was creating characters with names like Granny Goodness and Glorious Godfrey at DC.

So in his initial new storyline for CAPTAIN AMERICA, Kirby pitted Cap against a subversive organization that wanted to undo the American Revolution. These







were the Royalists, who not only wanted to reinstitute monarchy, but who dressed in powdered wigs and 18th century costumes! They were led by William Taurey and General Heshin, whose names were puns on "tory" (a supporter of the English during the Revolution) and "Hessian" (one of the German soldiers fighting on the British side).

The Royalist storyline culminated in issue #200, and was followed by the saga of the Night People of Zero Street, a strange population living beneath the streets of New York City. Here Kirby was in his own way anticipating the rise of New York's homeless population. Also, as usual, Kirby was dealing with a concept—the underground community—before other, younger writers did their own takes on it, as Claremont did with the Morlocks, Frank Miller with the sewer people, and Peter David with the Abomination's cohorts.

The special one-shot, CAPTAIN AMERICA'S BICENTENNIAL BATTLES, was a particularly personal project for Kirby. Continually experimenting in the 1970s, Marvel had begun doing reprints in large tabloid formats and occasionally did new stories in this format as well, such as this one. In it Cap encountered the mysterious Mister Buda, who resembled an Asian mystic but who had extraordinary powers to transcend time and space. (Mister Buda would later be established to be the Contemplator, one of the virtually immortal aliens known as the Elders of the Universe.) Mister Buda sent Cap back to various important points in American history. So it was that Cap encountered Benjamin Franklin (as Doctor Strange would do as well in 1976!) and Betsy Ross, who was, of course, inspired by the Captain's costume. Significantly, Cap's time travels addressed racial questions in America's past: he crossed paths with Geronimo, with the abolitionist John Brown, and with an escaped slave. Cap was present during the great Chicago Fire and during World War I, and, of course, returned to World War II to encounter Adolf Hitler and the Red Skull—and his late partner Bucky— once again. Cap even got to meet the young Jack Kirby before his time traveling was done!

It seemed only right that Jack Kirby, the cartoonist who so powerfully evoked the epic scale and mystery of the cosmos, should create a comics adaptation of that landmark of science fiction films, Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. The movie had actually come out quite some time before, 1968, but better late than never. Kirby started out with an adaptation of the film, but in subsequent issues he devised new stories about characters who came in contact with one of the film's mysterious monoliths. Within a year the 2001 book evolved in Kirby's hands into a very different series, MACHINE MAN, as we shall see in installments to come.

Kirby's work on CAP and 2001 in 1976 might be considered secondary to his creation of his last great super hero series, THE ETERNALS. It clearly has similarities to the Fourth World books. Once again, Earth serves as a battlefield between two rival superhuman races, and normal human beings become involved in the conflict. But whereas Kirby's New Gods had come from distant alien worlds, the Eternals and the Deviants were native to Earth. Moreover, in ages past, humanity had worshipped the mountain-dwelling Eternals as gods; indeed, many of the Eternals' names resembled those of characters from Greek mythology. The sinister and grotesque Deviants, on the other hand, who dwelt beneath the earth's surface, had inspired the legends of devils and demons. Kirby described both the Eternals and Deviants as evolutionary offshoots of humanity's own ancestors: perhaps the implication was that the Eternals and Deviants represented, respectively, the best and worst potentials of the human race that existed, genetically and geographically, between them.

Whereas the dynamic in THE NEW GODS was a struggle between the good and evil superhumans, in THE ETERNALS this conflict was overshadowed by a looming, greater threat. In the first issue the Fourth Host of the Celestials arrives on Earth, setting in motion new activity in the world of mortals by both the Eternals and the Deviants, who had both long remained hidden from the rest of humanity. The Celestials are colossal in size; they appear to have humanoid form, but every inch of their immense bodies is concealed by armor; they do not speak or communicate in any way that we humans can comprehend. The Celestials' plans, their motives, and their very natures remain utterly enigmatic.

But we do know one thing: they have come to judge the people of Earth. Ages ago the First Host of the Celestials had visited Earth and performed genetic experiments on humanity's apelike ancestors, resulting in the

evolution of the human race, the Eternals, and the Deviants. Now the Fourth Host had come to watch their creations for the next fifty years. If humanity did not live up to the Celestials' inscrutable standards, it would be destroyed.

Once again, Kirby was decades ahead of his time. Had THE ETERNALS been created in the 1990s, as the turn of the millennium looms before us, more people would have realized what he was doing. In THE ETERNALS Kirby created a sense that a time is quickly approaching when an age of history comes to an end, and humanity must both take stock of what it has accomplished and face up to an unknown, perhaps dangerous, destiny.

Kirby also turned out plenty of covers for Marvel titles, especially for characters he had helped create, such as THE FANTASTIC FOUR and THE AVENGERS, or Captain America in THE INVADERS.

Moreover, by now Marvel was full of young writers and artists who had spent the 1960s as fervent fans of Jack Kirby's work. They were so happy to have him back at Marvel that some of them put him into the stories themselves! Take a look at IRON MAN #85 and there he is, along with Stan Lee, and a whole pack of 1976 Marvelites, including Roy Thomas, Len Wein, Marv Wolfman, Archie Goodwin, John Romita, Sr., Marie Severin (who did the Bullpenners' faces)—and even Neal Adams, who wasn't even working there anymore!

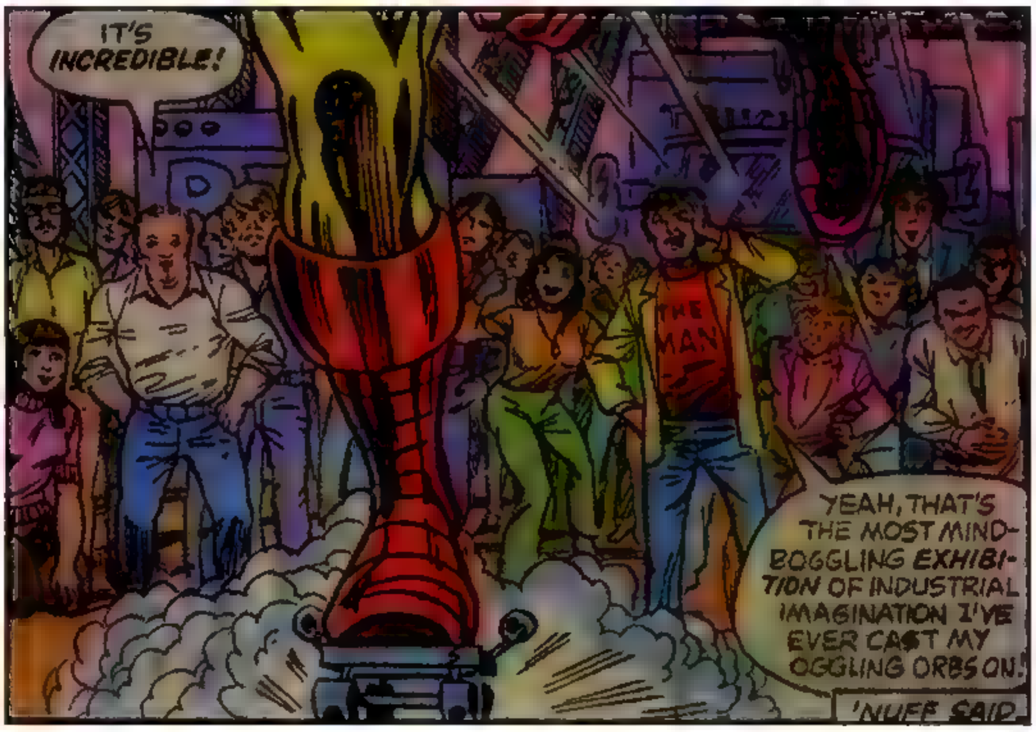
Len Wein wrote this issue and a number of others in early 1976, introducing Michael O'Brien, a detective investigating the death of his brother Kevin, the original Guardsman; Michael would go on to become the new Guardsman and a long-running Marvel supporting character in IRON MAN, THE AVENGERS, and elsewhere. Wein was soon succeeded by Bill Mantlo, who updated the Iron Man foe Jack Frost into the more sleekly costumed Blizzard. There swiftly followed Archie Goodwin and a significant new Marvel arrival, future editor in chief Jim Shooter, before Gerry Conway settled into the post of IRON MAN writer for an extended stay.

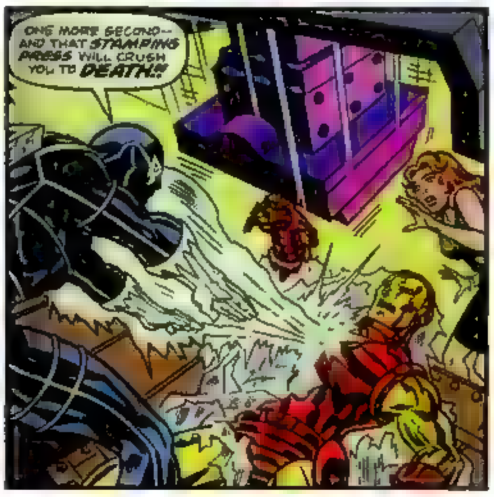
Conway's cleverest stroke in his run was to bring back Madame Masque, Tony Stark's former love on the wrong side of the law, but in disguise. In a blonde wig and one of those perfect face masks that only exist in comics, Masque posed as new secretary Krissy Longfellow, the better to watch over Tony's safety, unknown even to him.

Jack Kirby's appearance in IRON MAN was merely a walk-on; in FANTASTIC FOUR #176, though, he and Stan Lee were both major players with plenty of dialogue in perhaps the funniest FANTASTIC FOUR story ever published. Followers of Marvel VISION's "Silly Moments" column already know what I'm talking about: the day the shape-changing Impossible Man invaded the Marvel offices and threw them into chaos (well, more chaos than usual)! (VISION #21.—Tim)

Once again, a whole parade of Marvelites were on view: Roy Thomas, who wrote the story; Goodwin; Wein; Wolfman; Romita; Severin; Gerry Conway; newcomers Jim Shooter and Roger Stern; and another recent arrival, new F. F. artist George Perez, who drew the story complete with all the Bullpen faces (which until then had always been Marie Severin's territory).

Interestingly, this story also explained the role that Marvel Comics play in the Marvel Universe itself. Back in FANTASTIC FOUR #10, Stan had already established that the Fantastic Four told him and Jack Kirby their adventures, which they then transcribed in comics form.





In effect, the FANTASTIC FOUR comic book was a licensed biography of the F. F.! In this new tale Stan insists in the story that everything that Marvel publishes is the truth about the super heroes and Marvel never, ever just makes something up!

So in the Marvel Universe Marvel Comics are like newspapers in pictorial form, serving as the super heroes' own official press releases about themselves! Now when you think about it, that means the comics in the Marvel Universe can't reveal anything about heroes' secret identities. And would there be comics about "outlaw heroes" like the X-Men and the Hulk? In the story itself we see a poster of Red Sonja; does that mean the Roy Thomas of Marvel-Earth spent his time researching historical documents from the Hyborian Age in order to write comics about her?

The Impossible Man story served as comic relief after Roy Thomas's two major FANTASTIC FOUR storylines of the year. In the first Ben Grimm was once again cured of being the Thing, only to be replaced in the F. F. by Luke Cage, Hero for Hire. Ben eventually returned to the F. F.'s ranks wearing a battlesuit designed to look like the Thing; inevitably, of course, Ben reverted to the Thing's form once more.

There was also a long storyline in which Galactus once again threatened various inhabited worlds. But this is perhaps best remembered by two intentionally comic moments. The F. F. were warned of the danger by one of the High Evolutionary's New Men, a talking golden gorilla named Gorr who scaled the Chrysler Building in a clear nod to King Kong (and maybe to DC's golden ape Congorilla). And finally, Galactus suffered the most humiliating defeat of his career when he consumed the Impossible Man's planet Poppup—and got indigestion! (VISION #7. —Scorekeeping Tim)

Yes, all the other Poppupians died in the process, but, strangely, this didn't matter. It turned out that the Poppupians had a group consciousness, and so as long as

the Impossible Man himself was still alive, they all were. This, it seems, is what Impy meant in his very first story when he announced, "We Poppupians have no names! We know who we are!" When everybody is the same person, who needs names? Also when Impy broke into the Bullpen, an entire planet's population had invaded Mighty Marvel!

Marvel chose the bicentennial year to create a brand new character who was, in his own way, in the tradition of Kirby's Captain America—but most American comics readers never knew it at the time! For some time Marvel had a British department in its New York offices, putting together reprint comics specially designed for the United Kingdom. Eventually, it was decided to create new material for the British market as well, starting with a new Marvel super hero who would be English, not American. The task was turn over to new British-born writer Chris Claremont and veteran HULK artist Herb Trimpe, and the result was Captain Britain, future star of the EXCALIBUR comic.

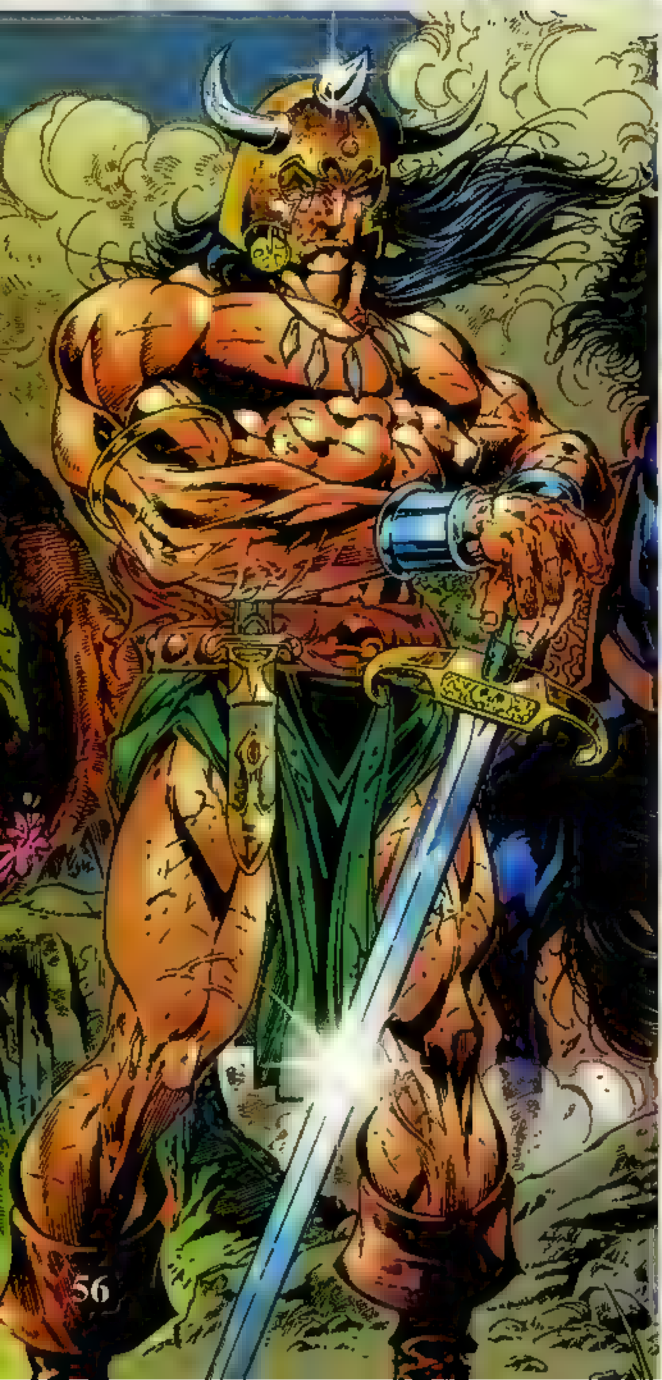
For now, though, Captain Britain only appeared in a new weekly British comic named after him. In the initial issues young English graduate student Brian Braddock was working at a research center when it was attacked by a criminal known as the Reaver. Braddock fled on his motorcycle only to accidentally run off a cliff. Near death, Brian had a vision of two godlike beings, who would years later be revealed to be the mysterious Merlyn and his daughter Roma. They bade him choose between two mystical objects, the sword of might or the amulet of right. Brian, of course, chose the latter, and immediately found himself healed and garbed in the costume of Captain Britain. He thereupon set about defeating the Reaver and his men; from then on Captain Britain would be Great Britain's costumed champion.

Claremont did not remain with the CAPTAIN BRITAIN series long, being preoccupied with this new book about mutants you may have heard of. But Chris was there long enough to create Brian's twin sister Betsy, whom he and artist Alan Davis would one day turn into the telepathic X-Man called Psylocke. Likewise Chris came up with other characters who would one day resurface in EXCALIBUR: Brian's girlfriend Courtney Ross, his ne'er-do-well brother Jamie, and detective Dai Thomas.

And speaking of Chris Claremont, Jack Kirby made one more appearance in a Marvel comic in 1976. Issue #98 of the newly reborn X-MEN series found the merry mutants in civilian dress (heavily layered) at Rockefeller Center at Christmastime. Among the many holiday revelers artist Dave Cockrum drew into the crowd were himself, new X-writer Chris Claremont, Matt Murdock, Nick Fury, and a contingent from the Distinguished Competition consisting of editorial legend Julius Schwartz and reporters C. Kent and L. Lane. In this season of mistletoe, the formerly shy Jean Grey and Scott Summers launched into a big Christmas kiss right in front of Stan and Jack, their very own creators. Heck, that's like doing it in front of your parents. Stan and Jack commented that, "those kids didn't act like that back in their day."

They were right, too. The new X-MEN was rapidly changing into a series unlike any that Marvel had seen before, and X-MEN #100 would prove to be a turning point with major repercussions right up through the present—as we shall see next time!

—Peter Sanderson



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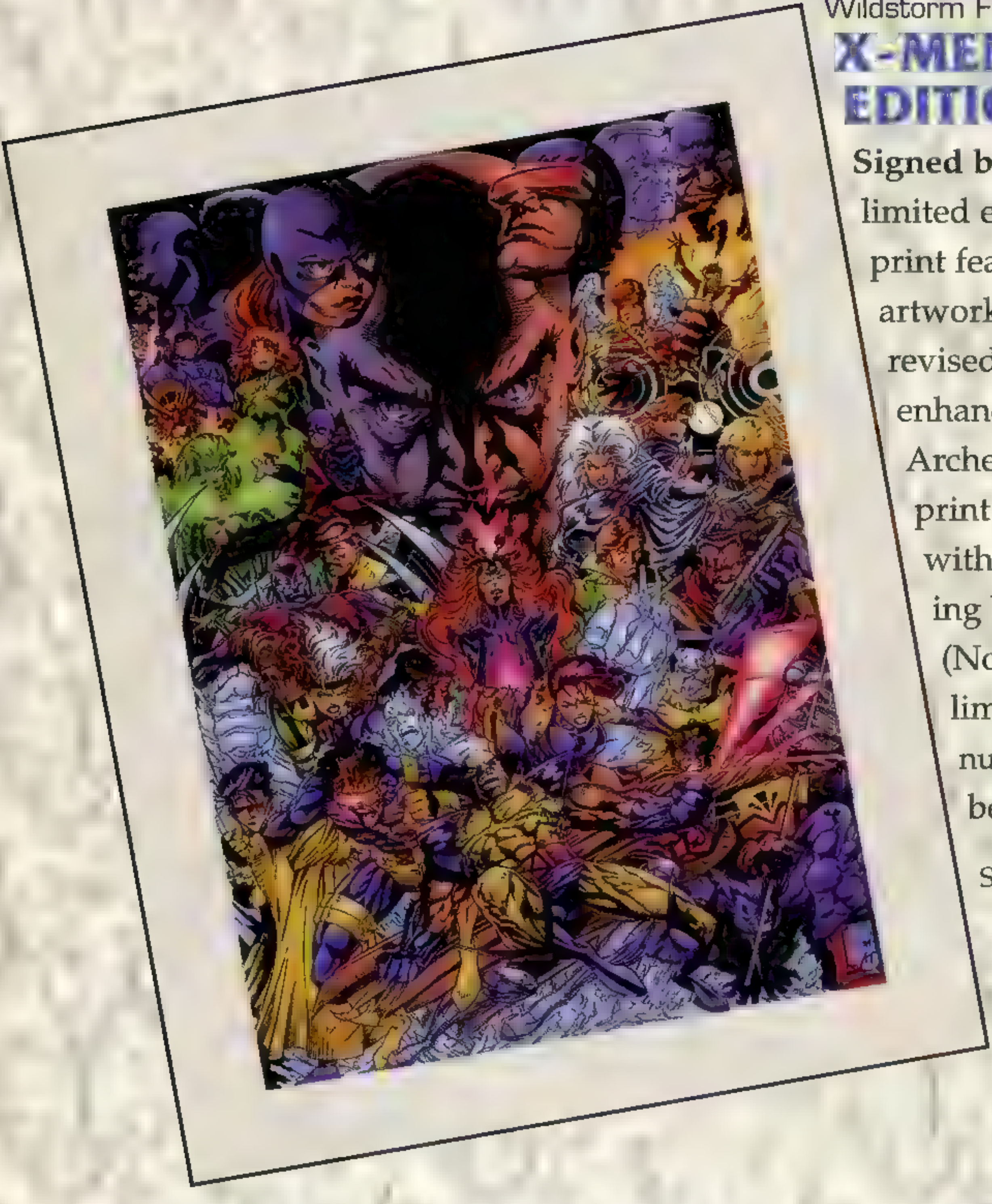

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X-MEN LIMITED EDITION IRIS PRINT

Signed by Joe Quesada! This limited edition, high-quality Iris print features rare **X-Men** artwork by **Joe Quesada,** revised for 1998 with new, enhanced colors. Printed on Arches watercolor paper, the print's image area is 10″x15″, with a total print size (including border) of 16″x21″. (Note: Because this print is limited to 300 signed and numbered units, orders may be allocated.)

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•Hand rubbed finish! •Limited to 100 Numbered Pieces!

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PLEASE NOTE: This statue was spotlighted in MARVEL VISION #25, but the incorrect picture was printed with it's description. We apologize for any misunderstandings this error might have caused.

NEXT MONTH #27 SHIP SHAPE

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